1609/5708.

LETTERS

TO A

FRIEND,

ON THE

LATE REVOLUTION

IN

FRANCE.

1792.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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JAN

Anna Eliza Dawson
July 1st 1792
given her by
Lord Newborough

THE Six following Letters are printed with the ſame view and intention as a foregoing one on the 7th of laſt June. They are printed juſt as they were written, without the leaſt correction or reviſal whatever; whoever therefore deigns to peruſe them, will readily excuſe every grammatical error he may meet with, when he is aſſured that the writer has been (as he always is) more attentive to ſtate with accuracy the facts he adduces, than to the rigid preciſion of language, eſpecially when he addreſſes his friends in a familiar ſtile.

1609/5708

ERRATA.

Page 5. read power.
20. r. fear, not feel.
33. dele in note *however*.

Anna Eliza Dawson July 2d 17

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

THE man, I find, who preſumes to think for himſelf concerning the late revolution in France, and refuſes to be led down the ſtream of popular opinion, is immediately marked and ſtigmatized as an *ariſtocrate*. It has thus fared with me in conſequence of the letter which I took the liberty to write to you on that ſubject on the 7th of laſt June. Such an appellation may be very faſhionable, yet it appears to me to be very vague, and very ill applied to thoſe who ultimately diſapprove of it, after having maturely weighed its merits and demerits in the ſcales of impartiality. Thoſe gentlémen however, who are pleaſed to make uſe of that epithet, ought previouſly to define in what ſenſe the word *ariſtocrate* is to be taken. If they ſuppoſe it to mean the abettor of arbitrary and deſpotic power in go-

vernment, I am no *ariſtocrate*, nor do I believe at this moment any ſuch exiſt even in France. On the contrary, if the true and genuine ſenſe be affixed to that word, I profeſs myſelf openly to be of that deſcription: and I will venture to affirm that my ideas on the ſubject will be approved and ſanctioned by the ſenſible and diſintereſted part of mankind.

I am the abettor of an ariſtocracy (not in the ſenſe, permit me to repeat it, which popular opinion is pleaſed to affix to that word) becauſe I am fully convinced that the natural wants of mankind require a certain gradation of powers to adminiſter to their neceſſities; that this gradation neceſſarily implies a higher and a lower claſs of people, and that therefore the latter muſt be ſubordinate and ſubſervient in a certain degree to the former, for if all are to command, there will be none to obey and execute, conſequently the neceſſary and mutual wants of ſociety can never be duly adminiſtered unto. Indeed to me it appears a wretched loſs of time to dwell upon ſuch a pitiful argument, confuted as it is, and ever has been by the conſtant experience of mankind. For in this ſuppoſition every individual muſt depend totally upon himſelf. He muſt

muſt retire to the woods, from whence he came, and lead the ſavage life of a wild and ſequeſtered Indian.

But permit me to aſk the queſtion, what were the motives which induced our ſavage anceſtors to leave their ſolitary abodes, and to unite in ſociety among themſelves? They were moſt undoubtedly with the view of profiting of thoſe neceſſary aids and helps, which are only to be attained by a ſocial compact, and which (as I have already obſerved) can only operate by a certain and well-regulated gradation of powers. Some muſt till the ground, ſow the grain, and reap the corn, that all may have the means of ſupporting life: whilſt others, by their induſtry and invention, are adding to the comforts and luxuries of it.

All ſocial compacts, it is certain, were very rude and imperfect on the firſt eſſay; but as neceſſity, which is the mother of invention, gave birth to their union in the firſt inſtance, ſo by degrees it expanded their ideas, and produced a gradual improvement. The mental faculties of men are very variable. Some men are endowed with a far greater portion of underſtanding than others. Theſe will always take the lead, and be looked up to with reſpect and veneration by thoſe

who do not ſo amply poſſeſs that bleſſing. Hence will the labourer be directed in the beſt method of cultivating the ground, the choice of the ſoil, and the grain adapted to it, by the perſon whom he knows to be better qualified to judge of thoſe matters than himſelf. Hence alſo will the component parts of a building be planned and prepared under the direction of a ſuperior head; and thus (as I obſerved) do all parties mutually help and aſſiſt each other.

Moreover in all ſocieties, compoſed as they are of individuals who labour under the defects inherent in human nature, it is neceſſary that ſome ſuperior powers ſhould be eſtabliſhed to ſettle differences which may ariſe among them, and to protect the injured parties from oppreſſion. It is likewiſe neceſſary, as they may be expoſed to the incurſions and attempts of an enemy, that ſome perſon or perſons ſhould be choſen from amongſt them to collect, diſcipline and harmonize the whole force, ſo as to give it one ſteady and uniform direction, and thus be able to repel the attacks, which may be made upon their perſons and property. From common experience in the world we cannot but be convinced that no ſociety can exiſt without the choice of

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ſuch perſons, delegated for the purpoſes aforeſaid, call them chiefs, generals, kings, protectors, or what you pleaſe, to whom this kind of ſupremacy muſt be given. Theſe neceſſary qualifications, in my humble opinion, in every ſociety conſtitute an ariſtocracy, for the *great* in talents, induſtry, and conſequently in wealth will always be *great* in powers. You will readily reply that no body doubts it; and whatever levelling doctrines deſigning and intereſted men hold forth to allure the people to their own private ends, they fully know that they never can ſtand good in practice. Yet, as we ſee, they have ſerved the preſent purpoſe in France. The people have been inveigled to their own deſtruction by that wretched ſophiſtry—the rights of ſociety have been invaded—ſovereigns have been hurled from their thrones—ſacrilege and injuſtice has ſtalked through the land—a whole country; an edifice, the work of ages, ruined, and laid level to the ground!

You ſee that I am reſolved freely to give my thoughts on the ſubject, heedleſs of the cenſures I may incur from the ſhafts of diſappointed ambition, or the preſſing wants of intereſted knaves. In my next (not to treſ-

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paſs too much upon your patience) I will give you a few of the arguments made uſe of by the firſt of the novel philoſophers in ſupport of that equality among men, which has turned the heads of almoſt the whole French nation, and bids fair unfortunately to make ſome progreſs in this iſland, if not counteracted by the good ſenſe of the people in general. If my poor endeavours, ſuch as they are, can in any degree contribute to keep the levelling monſter at a diſtance, they ſhall be inceſſantly employed in a cauſe ſo eſſential to the happineſs of mankind in general, and to the peace and glory of this country in particular.

I remain,

Dear Sir, &c.

Margate,
Sept. 16th, 1791.

LET-

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR,

IT is difficult to conceive how a man of Monſieur de Voltaire's good ſenſe and penetration ſhould fall into ſuch a multiplicity of miſtakes and incoherences on ſo trivial a ſubject as the inequality of the things of this world. He maintains that perfect equality exiſts no where but amongſt animals. "All "animals, he ſays, are equal; but man, hav- "ing received that portion of ſupernatural "light, which he calls reaſon, is a ſlave "throughout the globe."

With humble ſubmiſſion however to the philoſopher, it is certain that a perfect equality does not generally exiſt among animals. Many of them, through natural inſtinct, ſubdue and tyrannize over others. The jackall is ſuppoſed to be the lion's purveyor; to ſeek his food, no part of which he dares to touch, until his royal maſter's appetite is ſatiated. There are doubtleſs many other inſtances

ſtances of ſervitude (if I may call it by that name) in natural hiſtory among the brute-creation. Certain it is at leaſt that the weakeſt animals are a prey to the ſtronger. It is moreover an abuſe of terms to give to every ſpecies of dependence the name of ſlavery. That word ſhould only be made uſe of when dependence is carried to exceſs, and makes a man miſerable. Such an independence as animals enjoy, inſtead of making a man eaſy in his ſituation, would render him the moſt miſerable of all beings. Neither is it ſtrictly correct that the dependent ſtate of man in regard of his equals is in conſequence of his reaſon, it being rather the effect of his neceſſities. The philoſopher himſelf confeſſes it, as you will ſee hereafter. Reaſon indeed plainly points out to us the neceſſity and juſtice of that dependence, but it is not the primary cauſe. A philoſopher, who is deſirous of inſtructing the world, ought always to ſpeak correctly.

" If a man, he ſays, had met every where " with an eaſy, certain and ſafe ſubſiſtence, " and a climate ſuitable to his nature, it is " manifeſtly impoſſible that one man could " have enſlaved another..... Then the Ta- " merlans of the earth would have had no

" other

" other domeſtics than their own children." Here he acknowledges two ſources from whence dependence naturally flows. The firſt from our neceſſities;—the ſecond from the duty and affection which we owe to our parents. Parents have therefore naturally a right to demand the ſervices of their children, being indebted to them for their life, education, and every care and attention in the courſe of their infancy and youth.

" In this ſo natural a ſtate (he adds) which " all quadrupeds, birds and reptiles enjoy, " men would be as happy as they." Abſolute independence, as I ſaid, is not the natural ſtate of all animals in general. All thoſe animals, for example, which are called domeſtic, are naturally dependent on man. Were they to be conſigned to the woods, many of them would pine away and periſh for want of proper ſuſtenance, or become an eaſy prey to beaſts of ſuperior ſtrength. The thick and heavy fleece would incommode the ſheep in the heats of ſummer, if men, at the time that he profits of the wool, did not an eſſential ſervice to the animal by ſheering it to clothe himſelf. The beaſts, when ſatiated in their paſtures, ſeek of their own accord the ſhed which is conſtructed to ſhelter them from the incle-

mency of the weather. The bird, when tamed, returns eagerly to the cage, wherein he has been accuſtomed to find his food.

It is ſtill more erroneous to ſay that a man inhabiting the woods after the manner of beaſts, would be equally happy as they are, for nature has not given to him the ſame induſtry to procure a ſubſiſtence, nor the ſame means of defence, or the ſame clothing to defend him from the inclemency of the weather. The more ſavage men are, the more they are fearful, penſive and melancholy.

"All men, he ſays, would be neceſſarily "equal, if they had no wants." Poſſibly it might be ſo. But it is evident that the great Author of nature ſubjected them to thoſe wants that they might be forced into ſociety, for which he deſigned them. Mutual dependence therefore is natural, and very conformable to the views of the Creator.

According to our philoſopher, "it is de-"pendence, and not inequality, which is a real "evil." But every ſpecies of dependence is not a real evil. It is oftentimes, with truth, ſaid that ſervants are happier than their maſters. Indeed, generally ſpeaking, the higher a man is elevated in rank and dignity, the more dependent he is on others. "It is

"impoſſible,

" impoſſible, he ſays, it ſhould be otherwiſe. " In this world we muſt be divided into two " claſſes; the one of oppreſſors, and the " other of the oppreſſed." The thing however might be very poſſibly otherwiſe, as in fact it really is, if mankind were uniformly attentive to the voice of reaſon, and to the leſſons which religion preſcribes. *Do, as you would be done by,* is a precept deeply engraved in the heart of man. Religion teaches them to behold each other as brethren of the ſame family; to love and mutually aſſiſt each other with the ſame zeal and affection, as they themſelves would wiſh to receive. It teaches thoſe of inferior ſtation that reſpect and obedience which is due to their ſuperiors; and at the ſame time it commands the latter to treat the former in every reſpect with mildneſs, equity, and every reaſonable indulgence. The chriſtian religion has either totally aboliſhed, or at leaſt (where it is ſtill retained) rendered ſlavery leſs oppreſſive. It has made governments leſs ſevere, and men leſs ſanguinary. If the preſent race of philoſophers had as great a love for mankind, as they pretend, they would ſhow a greater reſpect of a religion, which preſcribes and inculcates ſuch rules and maxims, as alone can make men happy.

Our philoſopher contends that " equality " is, at the ſame time, both the moſt natural, " and the moſt chimerical thing in the world." This is a rank contradiction with what has been ſaid above. The inequality of mankind, and their mutual dependence is in conſequence of their wants, of their gratitude, and even of their paſſions. The philoſopher himſelf acknowledges it. Theſe are inſeparable from humanity, therefore mutual dependence is equally ſo. How then can equality be natural?

" Every man, he adds, has a right to be- " lieve himſelf equal to other men." But a child has not a right to think himſelf equal to his father. Nature gives to the latter a ſuperiority and a right to command. Unleſs a man is entirely blinded by pride, a malady too prevalent at this day, he muſt allow that ſome perſons are far ſuperior to others in accompliſhments both natural and acquired.

Throughout the whole of this ſubject, as Monſieur de Voltaire has treated it, there is nothing to be perceived that characterizes the man of genius! Nothing in his reaſoning; no moral to be gathered from it, which may prove profitable and uſeful to us! Inſtead of

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eſtabliſhing, as an inconteſtable fact, that marked deſign of Providence, which has conſtituted that inequality of conditions, which we meet with in this life, and to which we are bound to ſubmit, he has treated it as the effect of chance; the end or utility of which being totally imperceptible, can bind no man.

A moſt deteſtable leſſon indeed, which opens a door to every crime, and to every thing that is peſtilential to ſociety. But as it is ſaid that all poiſonous animals carry within themſelves their own proper antidotes, ſo does our philoſopher, who, at the concluſion of all his metaphyſical jargon, declares that "it does not follow from hence, that a man "is excuſed in neglecting the duty of his ſta-"tion: were it ſo, there would be an end "of human ſociety."

I remain,

Dear Sir, &c.

Margate,
Oct. 25th, 1791.

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LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

SITTING the other night in a retired part of the coffee-room, I perceived that you was engaged with two other gentlemen in tracing the cauſes, which produced the French revolution. As I am always eager to acquire information in general, and particularly ſo on a ſubject which now almoſt engroſſes the converſation of every body, I took the liberty to attend to the arguments which were adduced in ſupport of your opinions. They created in my mind the following reflections, which I beg leave to ſubmit to your conſideration.

Although I readily join iſſue with you, that there were many partial and accidental circumſtances, which, combining together, by degrees effected that aſtoniſhing event, yet there does not appear to me to have been any one regular ſyſtem, or well concerted plan, which as a primary agent immediately directed

directed it. The greateſt events have frequently happened in this world from the remoteſt and un-thought of cauſes. I could produce many proofs of my aſſertion. Let one however ſuffice, which is (if I may ſay ſo) almoſt within our own memory. When this nation invited the Prince of Orange to defend their civil and religious liberties againſt the encroachments of King James II. little did they dream of promoting a revolution. I ſpeak of the majority of the nation, for there were ſelf-intereſted individuals (as there will be in all countries) who, for their own purpoſes, promoted the ambitious deſigns of William III. which he had formed long before the death of Charles II. I refer you to the beſt hiſtorians on that period for the truth of my aſſertion.

The interference of the French in our diſputes with America, which you reaſonably ſuppoſe to have been one of the cauſes of the revolution, which afterwards took place in that nation, was not more unjuſt in itſelf, than it was impolitic on their part. But nations, like individuals, are apt to ſacrifice every intereſt to revenge. Otherwiſe it would be difficult to conceive that Monſieur de Vergennes, whom I ſuppoſe to have been miniſter of ſtate

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at that period, was ſo blind a politician not to foreſee the danger of ſuch a connection. And I believe him to have been too determined an ariſtocrate in principle, according to the very rigour of the word, to have promoted it, when his own favorite ſyſtem of government might have ſuffered in the conſequences. Be that as it may, the impolicy of the French miniſtry, in my opinion, conſiſted in draining their treaſury for the ſole purpoſe of oppreſſing an enemy, who had ſo conſpicuouſly triumphed over them in the preceding war. From the moment that the peace was ſigned in 1762 they never loſt ſight of this their darling object. Heedleſs of the conſequences, theſe ſhort ſighted politicians haſtily embarked in a cauſe, which ſoon after brought ruin and deſolation on themſelves.

It may eaſily be ſuppoſed that the French imbibed opinions of freedom and independence during their reſidence in America. But theſe opinions, and indeed thoſe of a far greater latitude, and of much more dangerous tendency, had got the ſtart of them in their own country, and were daily improving in the gay and faſhionable world. It only remained that they ſhould be diffuſed and diſſeminated among the people. This work was

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ſoon put into execution, and carried on with addreſs. It ſucceeded accordingly. As to the meaſures which the French purſued towards the attainment of their favorite object, they by far exceeded their tranſ-atlantic friends. And I believe that an American would be much offended if any compariſon between the two nations in that reſpect was attempted; for though he would readily acknowledge that there were too many acts of violence committed in his country through party rage, and under the ſpecious pretext of retaliation, yet he would bluſh to hear his countrymen branded and reproached with thoſe ſavage butcheries, and deliberate acts of barbarity which, to the indelible diſgrace of the nation, have been perpetrated in France. In the height of popular commotion, when the minds of the people are worked up into a kind of frenzy, we cannot be ſurpriſed at the exceſſes they commit. But to perpetrate ſuch bloody deeds with cool deliberation, and under the ſpecious pretext of juſtice, wants a name. It cannot, I will venture to affirm, for ſavage brutality, be matched in any civilized country under the globe. So lately as within theſe twelve months, when it might be ſuppoſed that their ſavage cruelty was ſome-

what abated, they ſeized a reſpectable printer of Douay (Derbais by name) in his own houſe. They forcibly dragged him out of it; and though not a crime, but that of ſuſpicion, (which has always been a ſufficient warrant for them) could be proved againſt the poor wretch, they tied him to a horſe's tail, and thus tore him limb from limb. Other indignities and wanton cruelties they committed upon the mangled carcaſe of this devoted victim, which were as refined, as they were infamous; but ſuch as are in every reſpect too painful to relate. Thus they exhibited a ſavage ferocity, which would put the wildeſt Indian to the bluſh, and for ever cloſe the jaws of a cannibal at the ſight of blood. A wild beaſt, when he ſeizes his prey through the impulſe of hunger, devours, but does not wantonly torment the trembling victim, which lies proſtrate at his feet.

I now return to my ſubject. The corner ſtone of the French revolution, or rather, I may ſay, the foundation of that fabric, was laid by the writings of that ſet of men who, by the perverſion of common ſenſe and common language, are called philoſophers. By this I do not mean to reprobate the totality of their writings. They have undoubtedly given

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ſome excellent ſtrictures on various ſubjects to the public; but they likewiſe have publiſhed ſuch as may juſtly brand them as the avowed enemies of mankind, and the peſts of ſociety. They diſcredit virtue—palliate, and apologiſe for vice, and endeavour with all the energy of their wit and ingenuity to overturn every principle, which the experience of ages has ſanctioned, and deemed eſſentially neceſſary for the peace and welfare of mankind.——They hold up to public view all the ſovereigns of the Chriſtian world as ſo many tyrants and deſpots, who wantonly ſport with the lives and fortunes of their ſubjects. The clergy they deſcribe as ſo many hypocrites and knaves, who ought to be exterminated from the face of the earth. Theſe ideas being fixed on the minds of the people, we may ceaſe to wonder at the degradation of Lewis XVI.; and at the annihilation of the clergy in France. Religion, according to theſe doctors, is only fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition: morality a bare name: vice and virtue of equal inſignificance.

In this abandoned groupe of levelling philoſophers *Voltaire* ſtands foremoſt. The legiſlative body of the French nation has paid almoſt divine honors to his departed manes;

and his aſhes are looked up to as the embers from which the freedom of France has been light up. By this *one act*, they have declared themſelves his diſciples, and the avowed abettors of his doctrines. In ſeveral parts of his works he reprobates every idea of a future ſtate. From whence it follows, that there can be no rewards for virtue; no puniſhments for vice hereafter. There can be conſequently no inducement to practiſe the one, or to avoid the other, but what may ariſe from the feat of the gallows. Laws then muſt be multiplied, and made ſevere to exceſs. What will be the conſequence? A moſt corrupt government, as a judicious writer remark. "Plurimæ le-"ges, corruptiſſima reſpublica." Another author, equally judicious, makes the ſame remark. He affirms that "Society is ever in-"effectual and miſerable in proportion to the "number and ſeverity of its legal reſtraints." They tell us however that public virtue (which by the bye is a high ſounding name without any meaning, particularly with the maſs of the people, that is, with three fourths of mankind) and true patriotiſm will bind all the members of a ſtate to the due obſervance of the laws. Be it ſo. Yet heretofore they had religion likewiſe to enforce that obedi-

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ence. With both theſe motives however, can we ſay that they never ſwerved from the rule of right? How then can we ſuppoſe that without religion, men will be equally virtuous, and leſs vicious? It is as much as to ſay, that by taking off one of the ſtrongeſt chains which confine a wild beaſt, the animal would be better and more ſafely ſecured.

Voltaire however is not always inſenſible of the futility of this argument. He contradicts himſelf, it is true; but contradictions coſt him little, writing ſometimes in favor of Atheiſm, Deiſm, Materialiſm, Socinianiſm, &c. &c. He ſays that "Laws avail nothing "againſt ſecret crimes. There muſt be an a-"venging God puniſhing in this world, or the "other, thoſe delinquents, who have eſcaped "human juſtice." In one part of his works (and indeed the temper of the times ſeems to verify his aſſertion) he compares man to an unruly horſe, and ſays, "If he has not a ſtrong "bit in his mouth, he will be apt to run away "with the rider," yet (as I ſaid) in other parts of his writings, he ridicules all religion, which undoubtedly is the ſtrongeſt curb a man can poſſibly have to his paſſions. May we not then, with great propriety, apply his own lines to himſelf?

"Tel

" Tel eſt l'homme en effet! Il va du blonc au noir,
" Et condamne au matin, ſes ſentimens du ſoir."

Nevertheleſs the elegance of his language, his ſarcaſtic ſtyle, the witty ridicule he throws upon the moſt ſerious ſubjects, and above all the pleaſant and flattering doctrines which he inculcates to thoſe who ſeek to emancipate themſelves from all civil and religious reſtraints, cannot fail to gain him many admirers, and to make many proſelytes. Mr. Paine, in his *Rights of Man*, tells his readers that the people are apt ſcholars. In iniquity, I believe, no body doubts the juſtice of the obſervation, when they turn an eye towards France.

There indeed they may ſee the fruits of thoſe horrid doctrines in the total ſubverſion of all that was good and ſacred. As I have obſerved before, they had gained upon the gay and faſhionable world. It only remained to have them diſſeminated among the people. This was eaſily done. The ſubtle poiſon was conveyed to them in pamphlets of the loweſt price, and (like Mr. Paine's late performance) circulated *gratis* throughout the kingdom. Yet nothing, I believe, faſcinated the minds of the people ſo effectually, as the doctrine of the equality of mankind, which ſeems to have

have been the lure of deſigning men, and (as I may ſay) the baſis of this new code of government; a doctrine as ridiculous in theory, as it is impoſſible in practice.

Among the adepts formed in the ſchool of this arch-legiſlator (for there were many *almoſt* as bad as himſelf) appears the name of Mirabeau. He was perfectly well trained, and properly inſtructed in every vice that could poſſibly degrade human nature. The city of Aix choſe him for their repreſentative. Such was the excellent judgment of this new *ſovereign* by *right divine*, the people, (or rather the populace) who rejecting its former miniſters for their immorality, choſe for its *favorite*, a man as notoriouſly immoral as the worſt of the courtiers. As the character of Mirabeau, for infamy, is diſputed by none, I need not appeal to his confeſſion, nor to the records of the Old Bailey for a corroboration of the fact. I ſhall therefore only add that to this ſame Mirabeau the legiſlative body of the French nation has paid the greateſt honors, as equally indebted to his labors for their recent revolution in both church and ſtate. His buſt, cut on a ſtone of the demoliſhed Baſtile, has been placed in the new Pantheon, deſtined to preſerve the memory of departed

Gallic,

Gallic worthies. When the artiſt humbly offered it to the *Auguſt Senate*, and the preſent accepted, one of the ſecretaries aſked if the name of Mirabeau ſhould be inſerted without any addition. "We know of but one Mi-"rabeau" was the anſwer of that *ſublime* Aſſembly. To theſe two *great* perſonages, (if I may call them ſuch) Voltaire and Mirabeau, is the French nation principally indebted for its *glorious* revolution, as I ſaid. Voltaire is canonized. And he and Mirabeau hold the moſt diſtinguiſhed places in the temple of worthies!

Happy are they who take warning at the misfortunes of others. In every nation, where the people are deſirous of paſſing through the thorny paths of this world in as peaceable a manner as it will admit: where they wiſh to tranſmit that portion of happineſs and eaſe, which they themſelves enjoy, to poſterity, they cannot too effectually guard againſt ſuch doctors and ſuch doctrines. We have them unfortunately within our own boſoms. Ambitious, knaviſh, and ruined men are to be found in all countries, who having little or nothing to loſe, may hope to get ſomething in the ſcramble. It is therefore the immediate intereſt of all people; it is the

intereſt

intereſt alſo, I ſhould imagine, as well as a duty which all ſovereigns owe to their ſubjects, not only effectually to guard againſt, but to unite in a body for the deſtruction of this levelling monſter. The evil is only to be eradicated at the ſource. In vain are French writings prohibited, and French Democrates proſcribed in Spain, and elſewhere. They have their emiſſaries in every kingdom and ſtate throughout Europe. They foment diſcontents, and keep the expiring ſparks of rebellion alive in Auſtrian Flanders. In this manner they have acquired the ſovereignty of Avignon, and have been trying hard for Geneva, Berne, &c. They correſpond with a *certain ſociety* in this country; and ſtrange to tell! reciprocal addreſſes of mutual friendſhip and intereſts have paſſed between them. It was a French democrate, who harangued the company on the 14th of July laſt at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand. Mounted on a table, he bellowed forth the excellencies of the French revolution. Was not this aiming a ſide-blow at the conſtitution of that country, which the great majority of the people decidedly approve of, and which at that moment protected both his perſon and property?

Do not miſtake me however. I am no advocate for deſpotiſm. That ſpecies of government is wearing out in Europe, and in a few years, it is to be hoped, if at all exiſting, it will be confined to the Eaſtern regions. Surely there is a medium between deſpotic power, and the ſubverſion of every thing? It is a diſtinction however which few people, and in particular our newſpaper writers ſeldom or never make. If any ſchemes are ſuppoſed to be forming by the French emigrants, or others for the recovery of their natural rights, of which they have been unjuſtly and tyrannically deſpoiled, they are immediately branded as attempting to introduce the old form of government with all its horrid appendages of arbitrary and deſpotic power. The King of France however, they may be aſſured, was cheerfully diveſting himſelf of thoſe prerogatives, which marked him as a deſpot. The nobles had offered, even before they had choſen a repreſentative in the ſtates-general, to pay a full proportion of the taxes with the reſt of the nation; and the clergy, in a great meaſure, to liquidate the public debt. They even conſented to the abolition

of

of tithes*, that bane to induſtry, and the perpetual ſource of diviſion between the paſtor and his flock, for a compenſation in land. But providence had ordained things otherwiſe, and time alone can ſhow the effects they will produce.

After much confuſion, order will ſometimes ariſe. We have had examples of it in our own country. If theſe French levellers then are ſuffered to proceed unmoleſted, poſſibly ſomething like a government may at laſt be formed. In this caſe, whatever their real miſeries may be, imaginary advantages will be trumpeted forth; the unwary and uninformed, will be impoſed upon, and at laſt become ſeriouſly anxious to ſhare thoſe ideal

* Nothing can give us a worſe idea of their legiſlation, than their decree on this laſt article. They have ſuffered the rithes to revert to the proprietors of the lands, who undoubtedly could have neither right or claim to them. For if they received the lands either as bequeſts, or by purchaſe, they were equally charged with the tithes, which were no part either of the bequeſt or the purchaſe. Inſtead then of reſerving theſe tithes for the pitiful remnant of their *own* clergy, they have thrown the whole burden upon the nation at large, three fourths of which have no intereſt in the land whatever.

bleſſings which they are made to believe the French enjoy in conſequence of their revolution. Intereſted men, and thoſe of deſperate fortunes will be on the tip-toe of expectation, and fan the flame of rebellion. Thus Europe will become one ſcene of anarchy, confuſion, and blood-ſhed. God forbid. Let then ſurrounding nations and ſurrounding princes never loſe ſight of that wiſe old adage, which warns them that

" When thy neighbour's houſe does burn,
" Take heed the next is not thy turn."

I am, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient humble ſervant,

Margate,
Oct. 16th, 1791.

LET-

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

I Believe you was as much ſurpriſed as myſelf to hear a certain gentleman in our company the other day attempt to vindicate the proceedings of the French National Aſſembly, to extol their legiſlation, and propoſe it as a model and pattern for other nations to copy after. This he did with more apparent zeal, than force of argument. Having paſſed a few months in France lately, it may be ſuppoſed he thought himſelf better qualified to judge of thoſe matters, than any other perſon preſent. As I hate diſputes of all kinds, and particularly in a public company, I remained (unwillingly I own) ſilent; reſolved however to communicate my ideas on the ſubject to ſome of my friends, who were then preſent, at a future day. Perceiving that you was particularly attentive to the diſcourſe, I take the liberty of addreſſing my opinions to you in this

this manner, and I ſhall be happy if they merit your approbation.

The preſent conſtitution of France, inſtead of being a chef-d'œuvre of political ſcience, as that gentleman would fain inſinuate, appears to me (with very few exceptions indeed) the very reverſe. It is radically vicious in many points. No form of government can be otherwiſe, which is not founded on religion and morality. Such has been the fixed idea of every legiſlator from the beginning of the world to this preſent day, big indeed with diſcoveries heretofore unthought of, and unknown. It is a fact however, which no man of reading will deny.

That the preſent legiſlators of France have had no regard for either religion or morality is ſufficiently demonſtrated, without the aſſiſtance of any other collateral proofs, by the affected honors they have paid to the aſhes of Voltaire, and would have paid to Rouſſeau, could they have perſuaded the preſent poſſeſſor of the precious relics of that departed *ſaint* to have ſurrendered them to their wiſhes. By adopting theſe bold and bare-faced advocates and zealous partiſans of licentiouſneſs and infidelity in the face of all the world, they have openly diſcovered the ſentiments of their own hearts.

hearts. According to the wiſe old proverb "Tell me what company you keep, and I "will tell you what you are," we may be allowed to give a ſhrewd gueſs at the principles of the diſciples by thoſe of the maſters, who, it is notorious decried and ridiculed both religion and morality with all the force and energy of their wit and ingenuity.—But if collateral evidence is neceſſary to prove my aſſertion, I ſay, that the very motion which was made in the Aſſembly upon the ſubject of religion demonſtrates it. "What mode of "worſhip ſhall be eſtabliſhed by law?" was the queſtion. Contrary to their views (which undoubtedly was, if poſſible, to have none at all, otherwiſe wherefore did they make the motion, when neither neceſſity, or the inſtructions of their conſtituents required it?) the decree paſſed in favor of the ancient religion. To counteract this, and in ſome meaſure to bring their favorite object to bear (at leaſt at a future period) they artfully procured an inadmiſſible oath to be adminiſtered to the paſtors of *that Church*, which they had decreed to be the *eſtabliſhed religion* of the realm. Thus at one ſtroke, they overthrew the ſpirit of the decree, for the oath makes ſuch an eſſential alteration in the very firſt principle of *that religion*,

religion, which they had juſt declared to be the only ſyſtem of faith eſtabliſhed by law, that it no more reſembles it, (if I may ſay ſo) than it does that of Mahomet. It includes alſo a glaring contradiction. But contradictions coſt them little. We ſhall often ſee them guilty of the like impeachments on common ſenſe. Provided the ends are attained, no matter by what means.

Meſſieurs Mirabeau, Camus, and other partizans of infidelity plainly foreſaw the effects of the oath both upon the minds of the eccleſiaſtics and the people. Thus they had a double motive for tendering it. The firſt (as I ſaid) was to counteract the decree in favor of the ancient religion, and thus by degrees to force them to depart from their ancient faith, and adopt their latitudinarian principles. The other motive, as a neceſſary preliminary to the former, was to rid themſelves of the clergy, who are profeſſionally the ſupporters of religion, and conſequently would continually thwart and counteract their deſigns. They were fully convinced that the clergy could not take the oath, without abandoning their faith, and they argued very juſtly that when the ſhepherds were drove away, the flock would ſoon be diſperſed. In this

manner

manner they made the clergy odious in the eyes of the people, holding them forth as ſo many enemies to the conſtitution, and conſequently to liberty, for refuſing an oath, which deſtroyed the work of their own hands.

But our * gentleman contended that there was nothing injurious to the ancient faith of France in the aboveſaid oath. If this aſſertion is true, the non-juring-clergymen of that nation are indeed only a ſet of obſtinate and refractory prieſts, as they are conſtantly deſcribed in the democratic prints, who, under the cloak of religion, retain the moſt dangerous principles to civil liberty. Let us examine that oath in the ſcales of impartiality, and then we ſhall be able to judge whether according to the principles of the ancient faith (it is upon that ground, be pleaſed to obſerve that I argue) they could conſcientiouſly take the oath required. I do not pretend to ſay whether they did well, or ill. Every man

* Since the writing of this letter, he is however become a member of the Whig Club. Every man has undoubtedly a right to think on politics as he pleaſes. But it ſeems rather ſingular that a man who is requeſting favors of the miniſter, ſhould openly aſſociate with his avowed opponents.

has his own opinion. You will therefore judge for yourſelf in that reſpect.

I find by the firſt article, relative to their decrees in eccleſiaſtical matters, that the National Aſſembly, *upon its ſole omnipotence*, has aboliſhed fifty-three biſhopricks.

Art. 2d. *Upon its ſole authority*, it has deprived biſhops, though legally and canonically appointed, of all power, juriſdiction, and authority, and has intruded others into their reſpective ſees.

Art. 3d. In conſequence of this deprivation, all thoſe biſhops and the clergy are denounced by the National Aſſembly, diſturbers of the public peace, if they preſume to perform their reſpective functions.

Art. 4th. *Upon its ſole authority*, it has ſuppreſſed all the cathedral churches, and given to clergymen, *choſen by themſelves*, the epiſcopal juriſdiction in dioceſes during their vacancy. They have likewiſe intruded upon the biſhops a council, *of their own choice*, by whoſe advice they are to regulate all their proceedings in whatever relates to juriſdiction, &c.

Art. 5th. *By the plenitude of its unbounded authority*, it has aboliſhed all religious vows. This decree has a retractive operation.

Art.

Art. 6th. *By its own authority*, it delegates a power to the laity to chooſe their own paſtors without any interference of the biſhop or clergy, and wills that all the biſhops ſhall be choſen without any application whatever to the Pope. In the choice of biſhops, every man, though he be a Calviniſt, Jew, or Pagan (who certainly are no members of *that church eſtabliſhed by law*, and conſequently cannot have the leaſt religious intereſt in the choice) have a vote at all elections of the kind.

Art. 7th indeed acknowledges the Pope as viſible head of the Catholic Church, but abrogates all ſubmiſſion and dependence upon him whatever. Every biſhop, upon his inſtallment, ſhall write a civil and complimentary letter to him, but ſhall inſert nothing, which denotes any acknowledgement of primacy of juriſdiction, or dependence, as aboveſaid.

Art. 8th requires that every officiating prieſt ſhall take an oath to conform to theſe articles to the utmoſt of his power and ability; and whoſoever ſhall refuſe ſubmiſſion to this decree ſhall be declared *ipſo facto* incapable of performing any public function either at the time being, or hereafter *.

* It is nugatory to ſay that none of theſe articles are

Such are in a few words, as nearly as I can recollect (for I quote them from memory) the contents of the aboveſaid decrees, to the obſervance of which the clergy are required to ſwear. We will now, with your leave, take a ſhort view of a few of the arguments which the non-juring clergy make uſe of in their own defence, and the reaſons they give for rejecting the oath required of them.

They alledge that before a man ſubmits to take an oath, he ought to be incontrovertibly aſſured of the competence and the undoubted authority of the party, which propoſes it. This, I believe, may be diſputed upon very good grounds, as I ſhall ſhow you hereafter. Another objection ariſes from the poſſibility that ſome of the articles propoſed may tend to produce a ſchiſm (which indeed they have moſt effectually done) by introducing novelties into the diſcipline of the church; and finally that ſome of them may, and indeed do, militate againſt the ancient faith of France, which by an Act of the Aſſembly they have declared to be the only *eſtabliſhed* religion of the land.

expreſſed in the oath required of the clergy, as they are all virtually implied in ſwearing to maintain the conſtitution in toto.

The

The whole National Aſſembly, they ſay, has been repeatedly called upon, as likewiſe the hireling-writers they employ for their own intereſted purpoſes, to prove that ſince the promulgation of the goſpel, any biſhoprick was either erected, enlarged, or curtailed by the civil magiſtrate *alone* in the Catholic Church, and that without the free concurrence of the eccleſiaſtical power. For according to the ancient canons, and more eſpecially according to the maxims of the Gallican Church, a national council is requiſite, in which each biſhop intereſted in the charge muſt give his formal conſent. The expreſs conſent of the king is likewiſe neceſſary, which can only be underſtood of a *free* conſent. And laſtly, according to the univerſal practice of *that church*, which they decreed to be *that of the ſtate*, the confirmation of the Pope has been deemed eſſentially requiſite.

The anſwer has not as yet been given. On the contrary it is a matter of fact that during the three firſt centuries, the church *alone* exerciſed that right. If in future ages we perceive a coalition between the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers, it was plainly intended for nothing more than a ſupport and protection for the latter. Whenever the people were

were called in at the elections of their prelates, it was with the view only of making them acquainted with the perſon who was to preſide over them in the ſpiritual line, and at the ſame time to learn if they had any well-founded objections againſt his perſon and character. Thus the National Aſſembly, in theſe two articles, is convicted of introducing an unheard of innovation, and of a palpable encroachment on the ſpiritual power beyond precedent or example in the Catholic Church.

The non-juring clergymen alledge that no biſhop can be deprived of his juriſdiction, unleſs he be convicted of ſome uncanonical fault, or by his voluntary ceſſion, or by death. Upon other grounds his expulſion has always been deemed the effect of violence and tyranny. Every function performed by an intruding biſhop, in the dioceſe of a living prelate, has uniformly been conſidered by all antiquity as null and void. There is ſcarcely a dioceſe in France at this moment, which has not been affected more or leſs in this manner by the decrees of the National Aſſembly.

The non-jurors contend that religious vows are ſanctioned by the evangelical counſels; and theſe, they add, are proved by certain warrant of ſcripture. To proſcribe then

ſuch

ſuch practices is both a ſcandal, and a ſacrilege. Be pleaſed to obſerve that I argue only according to the tenets of the ancient faith, which the National Aſſembly, by a late decree has adopted, and declared to be the *eſtabliſhed* faith of France.

A canonical miſſion, they ſay, has always been deemed the ſource of juriſdiction. Such perſons therefore who have had no other induction into the miniſtry, but what they received from the people, or the magiſtrates, have ever been held as intruders; or, as our bleſſed Saviour calls them, Thieves and Robbers, who have climbed over the fences of the ſheep-fold. The National Aſſembly, it is notorious, of its own *ſole* authority, appoints, inſtitutes, and gives juriſdiction to the clergy throughout France. From whence, for example, was the biſhop of Verſailles to derive his ſpiritual powers and juriſdiction, according to the doctrine of the ancient faith of France? From the Pope undoubtedly. But the Aſſembly will not have it ſo. From the biſhops then, whoſe dioceſes have been curtailed and parcelled out to make up this new biſhoprick? But they have no juriſdiction over his dioceſe, and therefore cannot confer

upon

upon him what they do not poſſeſs themſelves.

The non-juring-clergymen declare that it is an article of the catholic faith, and conſequently of the ancient faith of France, that the biſhop of Rome has a primacy both of honor and juriſdiction over the *whole* church; a delegated power, as ſucceſſor of St. Peter, from heaven, of ſuperintending and governing the whole flock, both the paſtors and the people. The decree then of the French National Aſſembly which limits his authority to a bare letter of compliment, and prohibits all acknowledgment of his authority and juriſdiction in ſpirituals, is a direct rejection of an article of faith, and conſequently in catholic principles (were there no other objections to it) renders the oath *abſolutely* inadmiſſible.

At the moment that theſe unheard of doctrines in the Gallican church were moved, diſcuſſed and decreed, the biſhops made their appeal, and ſtood up for the faith and the rights of the church. At the ſame time they offered to unite with the Aſſembly in every propoſition for the good of the nation and of the people at large, provided they did not militate with their ſuperior duty, and on condition that they might be permitted to aſſemble

ble in council, and act conjointly, for that purpoſe, in union with the Head and firſt Paſtor of the Catholic Church. Their petition was rejected. Thus the power of the keys which, they ſay, were given to churchmen *alone*, was now transferred into the hands of the laity. In this chaos and jumble of things, it is natural to ſuppoſe that the people know not what to believe, and conſequently will ſoon be melted down into the maſs of Deiſts, Atheiſts, &c. *the grand deſideratum* of the preſent French legiſlators. The effects of theſe pernicious doctrines have already been too viſible to need any further animadverſion upon them.

Permit me then to put the queſtion. All prejudices laid aſide, can any biſhop or prieſt, according to the principles of the ancient faith of France, as lately decreed to be the *eſtabliſhed* religion of that country, ſwear to maintain the civil conſtitution of the clergy, as I have ſtated it above? And in particular may not that gentleman, who ſtood up ſo warmly for the propriety of the oath, be aſked if in catholic principles, ſuch as I have ſtated them, it is poſſible that the clergy can, without perjuring themſelves, ſwear to its contents? If he ſays that the majority of the

articles regard only the diſcipline of the church, I ſhall not ſwell my letter to diſpute the caſe with him, though at the ſame time I deny a power in the ſtate to interfere in any of them, provided that they are confined to ſpirituals *alone*, without the concurrence of the eccleſiaſtical power, according to the ancient practice of the church, now decreed (as I have been obliged repeatedly to obſerve) the *eſtabliſhed* faith of the realm. But one of the aboveſaid articles (if he knows any thing of the tenets of the ancient Gallican church) militates moſt pointedly againſt it; and conſequently he who ſubſcribes to it, according to thoſe tenets, is no longer a member of the Catholic Church.

I took the liberty to mention to you that there were other radical defects, according to my ideas, in the preſent French legiſlation, than that of attempting to frame a government without religion and morality. Theſe are the decrees relative to the form of government, to the liberty and ſecurity of individuals, to property, and to the adminiſtration of juſtice, which are directly contradictory to the unanimous wiſh of the nation. On all theſe heads (as well as in that reſpecting the property of the clergy) the deputies have acted

acted contrary to the inſtructions and mandates of their conſtituents. Therefore, as I ſaid, the clergy may have reaſon to doubt of the competence of thoſe who formed the oath. You may read all theſe inſtructions in Monſieur de Calonne's excellent pamphlet *on the preſent and future ſtate of France*, to which I refer you, and then you will be able to judge for yourſelf.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant, &c.

London,
Dec. 15th, 1791.

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE heard it frequently ſaid (and indeed by yourſelf) that the abuſes both in church and ſtate were arrived to ſuch a pitch of turpitude in France, that a regeneration of both was a work of abſolute neceſſity. It was a work of ſuch magnitude and importance, as nothing leſs than the violent convulſion, ſuch as enſued, could poſſibly effect. Excuſe me if I differ in opinion from you. The remedy was at hand, had they choſen to apply it. Previous to any coercive meaſures taken by the democratic party, Louis XVI. manifeſted his generous ſentiments to the States-General in a declaration, which conſiſted of thirty-five articles. At the concluſion of his ſpeech, he delivered himſelf in the following, (I may add) gracious manner: "Without vanity, I may ſay that no mo-" narch, *of his own accord*, ever offered to do " more for his people, than myſelf. Indeed no

" no nation can deſerve it more eminently, " than that of the French." What was it he offered to do? To aboliſh all illegal taxes and loans; to reſtore, and give vigour to the finances; to curtail the expence of his own houſehold; to aboliſh all the pecuniary privileges, and exemptions of the clergy and nobility, beſides the abolition of all thoſe particular taxes, ſuch as the *gabelle* (the ſalt-tax) and many others which were odious and onerous to the people; to limit his own power reſpecting the future creation of nobility; to aboliſh the *lettres de cachet*; to grant the freedom of election, the liberty of the preſs, free trade, perſoual liberty, equal taxation, with many other voluntary conceſſions too long to enumerate *. Even Monſieur Necker himſelf declared (and he was the firſt miniſter of finance, and conſequently muſt have known the reſources of the nation) that if the payment of the taxes was duly enforced; a ſtrict œconomy obſerved; and a due attention paid to the receipt and the expenditure, the af-

* It is ſaid that theſe were fair promiſes, but they could not be depended upon. Why? Was the regenerating party the weaker for having the King on their ſide? Thus it is evidently proved that their views extended further than the reformation of abuſes.

fairs

fairs of the nation might undoubtedly be retrieved.

Inſtead of proceeding in that peaceable and tranquil manner, which might have been expected from any other deſcription of men, they ſought a remedy to the evils of the ſtate, more congenial to their own intereſted views, by levelling the whole ſyſtem at once. One of the greateſt grievances that country laboured under, aroſe from the dilapidated ſtate of the finances. Has the late convulſion adminiſtered a remedy to that evil? The debt which had only increaſed to three thouſands of millions of livres in one whole century before the revolution, has been increaſed ſince that period to twelve hundred and fifty-five millions. Has this convulſion done away thoſe illegal impriſonments, formerly known under the name of *Lettres de Chachet?* The name, if you pleaſe, they have aboliſhed, but not the evil. For there have been more of theſe extra-judicial orders iſſued within fifteen months after the revolution, than for the fifteen years that preceded it. By a decree of the National Aſſembly all thoſe who had been detained in any of thoſe manſions of woe and deſolation, called ſtate-priſons, by the

the former government, were liberated *. But ought they not, at the ſame time, to have paid ſome attention to the cauſes of their impriſonment, and not indiſcriminately to diſcharge them without ſuch inquiry? For in many inſtances their detention in thoſe places of durance was as great a ſtretch of arbitrary and deſpotic power, *in another ſenſe*, as if they had been confined merely at the caprice and pleaſure of a king or a miniſter of ſtate. For according to *ſtrict law and juſtice* many of theſe culprits had forfeited their lives, and ought to have undergone capital puniſhments for their crimes. It is a well-known fact that the old government in every reſpect, except that of diſtreſſing the people for the payment of the taxes, was very ſlack in its penal purſuits. The *Lettres de Cachet* then were not (at that period at leaſt) ſo much an outrage to humanity, as an abuſe of juſtice. Beſides how can the preſent rulers impeach the former government of crimes, and

* In the Baſtile only ſix or ſeven perſons were found immured. Three or four of theſe were ideots, and in conſequence were conveyed to a proper place deſtined to receive ſuch miſerable objects. The others had been confined for forgery, and in juſtice ought to have been hanged.

with

with an abuſe, of which they themſelves connive, and wink at? Frequently when the populace have proceeded to exceſs and violence, either by confining, or tearing to pieces ſuch perſons as have been unfortunately the objects of their rage and diſpleaſure, did the Aſſembly attend impartially to the informations laid before them? Did they not receive ſuch ſavage intelligence with apathy and indifference? Charles Lameth, in particular, one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed democrates of the whole band, uſed jeſtingly to ſay, "Gentlemen, theſe are only the reports "of the day, which prove that the people "will always have the upper hand." But might not the ſame thing have been ſaid of the abuſive power of the *Lettres de Cachet* under the former government? They were only the reports of the day, in which the king, or his miniſters are ſure to have the upper hand; with this difference only, that the people are the worſt of tyrants. They fear not to be dethroned. In their fury and madneſs they make no diſtinction of perſons. They ſuſpend on the ſame fatal lantern both the prince and the baker. The people are the moſt dangerous, and the moſt to be dreaded of all deſpots. I do not mean to condemn however

however the ſuppreſſion of the *Lettres de Cachet*. They did well to ſuppreſs them, but they ſhould not have transferred that abuſive and extrajudicial power into worſe hands. Had they not flattered the people however to exceſs, and blinded them with ideas of their own importance, the deſigning party could never have attained their ends. Their flattery to them was conſequently as groſs, as their politics in employing ſuch an engine was unſound. I will give you a few inſtances of it.

Meſſieurs Malet and Vignerot (heretofore Count de Lameth, and Duke d'Aguillon) feigning to believe that the peaſants had ſet fire to their country-houſes, declared that "the only thing they dreaded was the poſſi-"bility that thoſe *good people* had burnt their "fingers in the tranſaction." The Duke d'Aguillon, in particular, has oftentimes been heard to ſay, that "if any Frenchman was "to offer to aſſaſſinate him, he believes he "ſhould not offer to defend himſelf, for fear "of encroaching on the liberty of a citizen." Theſe are ſuch puerile anecdotes, ſuch inſults upon common ſenſe, ſuch fulſome adulation, and impoſition on the people, that I

am almoſt aſhamed to relate them. It proves however that French levity ſtill ſubſiſts; and that with ſuch ideas, the nation is ſtill very unfit for freedom. One of the firſt acts of the Aſſembly was evidently in favor of the *majority of the people:* at leaſt ſo the people underſtood it, who are ſeldom blind to their own intereſts. On the 6th of July, the Aſſembly aboliſhed all the exiſting taxes as illegal. But in the mean time, "not to create "confuſion in the ſtate," they declared "that "they ſhould be levied for a ſtated time." The people underſtood the firſt part of the decree, but cloſed their ears againſt the ſecond. Hence, in a great meaſure, ariſe all the pecuniary misfortunes of that country. Hence is the amazing *deficit* between the receipt and expenditure to be accounted for. No wonder indeed it ſhould be ſo, if the report be true that the latter is eſtimated at forty-eight millions of livres per month, and the former only amounts to ſixteen millions of the ſaid currency. The taxes were evaded or refuſed in every part of the kingdom, and eſpecially the ſalt-tax, which, of all others, was moſt productive.

I now return once more to the *Lettres de Cachet.* All exaggerations laid aſide, from the

the year 1475 to the preſent revolution (this ſtatement be pleaſed to obſerve is taken from the pen of an enemy to the former government) we do not find three hundred impriſonments in conſequence of them for the ſpace of three hundred and fifteen years, including the moſt tempeſtuous times of the monarchy, and during the adminiſtration of the moſt arbitrary and deſpotic miniſters. In the laſt half century we ſcarcely can find more impriſonments by order of the ſovereign, than have taken place within a year and half by order of the Aſſembly, or by the committee of *reſearch*, and of the municipalities, of which it has the direction. That committee of *reſearch*, in particular, is one of the moſt iniquitous of all inquiſitorial tribunals. They attend to every information, either real or ſuppoſed, againſt their enemies, and proſecute them to the utmoſt extremity in conſequence of it. But when their own partiſans have been denounced, and their guilt proved, they have either lent a deaf ear to the accuſation; or, if they deigned to take notice of it, they ſuffered the delinquents to remain unpuniſhed.

Yet I readily allow that the Aſſembly has done away ſome of the abuſes of the former

government. At the ſame time however I muſt alſo declare that the *majority* of the members (I do not mean as to numbers, but as to influence, under the auſpices of the *majeſty of the people*) had from the very firſt moment no other view than that of levelling the whole fabric to the ground. Their decree on the *rights of man* is a ſufficient proof of my aſſertion. It muſt ſeem extraordinary that any legiſlators ſhould be found ſo completely ignorant of the nature and diſpoſitions of mankind, as to inform the people of their rights, without at the ſame time impreſſing on their minds the duties they lie under as members of ſociety. At that moment ſurely the members muſt have thought themſelves ſeated in Noah's ark; that on the ſubſiding of the waters, the whole earth belonged to them, which they were at liberty to portion out as they pleaſed. In conſequence of this deluſion, they proclaimed that "all men are born free, "and ought to remain ſo;" that "one man "is no greater than another;" with many other poſitions of the ſame curious nature. On this great event, they congratulated each other with having been the firſt people to reveal principles, which (ſarcaſtically) they ſaid ought to have been the baſis of the Engliſh conſti-

conſtitution, as ſettled at the Revolution in 1688. But I ſuppoſe our anceſtors had not ſufficient wit and penetration to make ſuch a rare diſcovery!

Nevertheleſs politicians might aſk them a few troubleſome queſtions. As for example, Are men to be governed by theories, and metaphyſical ſubtleties? Is experience, and the practice of ages to be held of no account? Are we to confound the ſavage with the ſocial man? natural independence, with civil liberty? We may as well ſay, that as men are born naked, ſo they ought to remain, as to declare that becauſe all men are born free, ſo likewiſe they ought to continue. Men however, though born naked, live clothed; as they, though born free, live ſubjected to the laws. Clothes indeed confine and ſtraighten a little the motion of the body, but they ſhelter and defend it from the inclemency of the weather, and many other exterior inconveniencies. Laws alſo cramp the paſſions, but they protect the honor, the lives and property of men. To ſpeak therefore correctly, we ought to diſtinguiſh between liberty and independence. The former conſiſts in obeying the laws, which are enacted for our ſecurity and preſervation; whereas the latter abſolutely

lutely implies a life ſimilar to that of a wild beaſt, which is conſigned to the woods. This ſubject reminds me of a very ſenſible anſwer, which a Venetian ambaſſador made to a perſon who charged his countrymen with being ſlaves. "It is true," replied the ambaſſador, "we are ſlaves to our laws; and it is from "that reverence which we pay to them, that "our liberty reſults. Thoſe people are only "free, who pay due obedience to the laws; "and the more they ſupport, and give vigour "to them, the greater freedom they enjoy." It muſt therefore appear ſtrange to the whole civilized world that the National Aſſembly ſhould adopt a code, even in appearance (for there is no reality in it, but to throw duſt in the eyes of the people) which in the execution muſt introduce every thing that is baneful to ſociety.

But vanity, as well as fear, directed all their actions. They had ſet on the populace to deſtroy monarchy and all its appendages, and were fearful, when they adjourned their Houſe to Paris, they ſhould themſelves become the victims of the evil ſpirit they themſelves had conjured up. Hence ſo many decrees upon the inviolability of their perſons, and declaring it high treaſon to accuſe any member

member without the ſpecial leave and permiſſion of the Houſe.

At the ſame time that they took ſuch wiſe precautions for their perſonal ſecurity, they did not neglect their pecuniary intereſt. They ſettled among themſelves the amount of that ſtipend, to which they conceived they were entitled, for the labours they undertook for the public good. This they ſtated at twenty-four livres per day, including the days of their arrival and departure from Paris, as likewiſe five livres each poſt for travelling expences. By a decree, they authorized Monſieur Necker to pay ſix months of this ſaid ſtipend to every member in advance. This article alone, without the addition of many other concomitant expences, amounts to ſeveral millions in the year. What muſt appear ſtill more ſurpriſing in this tranſaction, is that the ſame Monſieur Necker, who was called the *tutelar angel* of France, was obliged to advance this ſtipend at the very time, that they refuſed him a loan of thirty millions for the preſſing neceſſities of the ſtate. How different was the conduct of the States-General in 1614. The deputies of that Aſſembly refuſed all pecuniary emoluments, thinking them-

themſelves highly gratified by being appointed to ſerve their country. But the preſent legiſlative body, when applied to for the poor, (now bereft of all ſupport by the deſtruction of the clergy and the religious houſes), with a ſmall part of their ſalaries, immediately broke forth into murmurs, and exhibited the moſt evident ſymptoms of indignation and diſcontent. In conſequence thereof, they immediately called for the order of the day.

If the National Aſſembly had attended only to remedy abuſes, it had done well. But many of theſe abuſes, were they ſtill of a greater magnitude, did not bring that death and deſtruction to the ſtate, which it has experienced ſince the revolution. One of the commiſſaries, employed by the Aſſembly to ſuperintend the *Caiſſe Deſcompte*, informed them that ſince the decree which ordered that the *Caiſſe Deſcompte* ſhould in future be paid in *aſſignats*, that is in paper-money, they had been obliged to procure ſpecie from Holland and Spain at the enormous diſcount of ſixteen and eighteen per cent to anſwer the demands made on it.

It may be aſked, what is become of the crown-pieces and other ſilver coin which here-

heretofore were ſo plentifully ſeen in France? of the patriotic donations they received? of the money coined, for immediate uſe and preſſing neceſſity, from the king's plate, which he ſent to the mint for that purpoſe? Not a *louis d'or* to be ſeen, or to be had, if not bought at more than one fourth of it's value. What are become of the revenues of the church, and of the ſpoils of the ſanctuary? I believe at this moment, ſuch queſtions would puzzle the moſt ſpeculative revolutioniſt. Yet they have the aſſurance to publiſh to all the world that "it is ſufficient for Frenchmen only to know "their wants, to find their reſources at hand."

What is become of their trade, which has ſo rapidly decreaſed, if it is not totally annihilated by their commercial treaty with this country? This treaty has been one of the greateſt evils which France has experienced. Why did they not apply their regenerating hands towards the expunging of that evil? The trade from the port of Bourdeaux alone has fallen ſhort by two thouſand five hundred veſſels. At Lyons all the manufactures are at a ſtand. Their potteries are totally ruined by the ſuperiority of our Staffordſhire ware: their cottons, &c. by Mancheſter. In Nor-

mandy ſeveral thouſands of people are thereby deſtitute of bread, and conſequently ſtarving. Here was a mighty ſcope for their regenerating principles, if ſuch they had adopted in ſincerity of heart! yet, without money, without trade, and without an ally (for France has loſt Sweden, Pruſſia, the Porte, Holland, Poland, the Princes of the Empire, and her allies in the Eaſt-Indies) ſhe dares to bully the Emperor. With us ſhe dares not *openly* to quarrel, though the commercial treaty, as I have ſaid, corrodes the very vitals of the country. But ſhe ſends her dark emiſſaries among us, with the ſame view that they were diſpatched to Avignon, Geneva, Berne, &c. &c. If Tom Paine, whom I look upon to be one of her *ſable ambaſſadors*, and who was aſſociated with that party which were for deſtroying the king of France after his capture at Varennes, for which purpoſe he publiſhed a pamphlet called the Republican; if Tom Paine, I ſay, was to preſide at a tribunal in America or France, and ſit in judgment upon any raſh fellow of reverſe principles to thoſe which he has ſo daringly publiſhed in this country, I aſk of him what his fate would be? He would ſoon be deſervedly ſuſpended

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on the fatal lantern. A further diſcuſſion on the clergy, I will leave for another letter, having already made this too long; when I hope to ſhew you the true cauſe of their deſtruction, as well as of the overthrow of royalty.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your ever obilged humble ſervant.

London,
Feb. 18th, 1792.

LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR,

THERE can be no doubt, at leaſt with thoſe who have any knowledge of human nature, that the opulence of the French clergy was the true and genuine cauſe of their ruin and deſtruction. It was the glare of that fatally reſplendent metal, which ſo often makes men commit great crimes, that excited the envy, and inſtigated the rapacity of a great portion of the nation. Like our Henry VIII, as Biſhop Godwin ſays, they "were ſtrongly "diſpoſed to promote a reformation that "would turn *the penny*, and furniſh the Ex-"chequer." For which purpoſe, "it was "thought neceſſary to leſſen the reputation "of thoſe they meant to oppreſs." This is Mr. Collier's remark. I muſt confeſs that I feel a ſingular ſatisfaction in appealing to the writings of ſuch men, whoſe liberality, candour, and ſuperior love of truth ſtood paramount to their own, and the prejudices of the

the times they lived in. Their arguments, though on tranſactions ſo remote, are equally applicable to the late proceedings in France. "If degeneracy and miſbehaviour," as Mr. Collier obſerves, "were the grand motive of "their diſſolution, why were they not put "under better management? Why had they "not ſome trial for reformation? If unne-"ceſſary expence, if luxury and licentiouſ-"neſs are good reaſons to change the owner, "and determine the eſtate, if this will hold, "we ſhall have ſtrange transferring of titles." It is not therefore the poſſeſſion, but the abuſe of riches which is criminal.

To ſay that many individuals among the clergy never miſapplied their revenues, or lived in no reſpect derogatory to the ſanctity of their profeſſion, would be too groſs an adulation. They are men as well as their neighbours, and conſequently ſubject to the infirmities of human nature. But if we attend to the generality of facts, it will appear that their frequent gratuitous contributions to the ſupport of the ſtate, and their extenſive charities to the poor (for which deſcription of unhappy men there has been as yet no proviſion in France) were ſuch as did honour to their patriotiſm, and credit to the duties of their ſtation.

In

In the courſe of the war of 1741 they gave 54,000,000 of livres in the ſpace of ſeven years. That is, 12,000,000 in 1742——15,000,000 in 1745——11,000,000 in 1747, and 16,000,000 in 1748. In the ſame proportion they have aſſiſted the ſtate ever ſince; and at this criſis (the revolution) they offered from 24 to 26,000,000 to ſupport the ſinking credit of their country.

I ſhall not attempt, could I poſſibly do it, to enumerate their extenſive charities during the preſent æra, becauſe it might be deemed a ſpecies of adulation to the living, who are *ſolo Deo teſte contenti*, and ſeek not the praiſes of men. But without the imputation of that reproach, I may venture to name a few of their predeceſſors, who within the preſent century have departed this life. We ſhall find that they diſpoſed of their revenues in a manner that baffles all cenſure and reproach. M. Saleon, archbiſhop of Vienne, gave the entire revenues of his biſhopric to the poor, and lived totally upon the produce of his family-income, the half of which likewiſe was employed in charity.

M. de Janſon, archbiſhop of Arles, out of 45,000 livres per annum which his biſhoprick yielded, he reſerved only 15,000 to himſelf, and

and beſtowed the reſt for the ſupport of many honeſt and worthy families who were in a ſtate of penury and indigence.—M. de Rochebonne, biſhop of Carcaſſonne, lived, in his own perſon, as poor as the moſt indigent of thoſe for whoſe ſupport he expended all his revenues.—M. de Morenville, biſhop of Chartres, for many years expended almoſt his whole income to defray the extraordinary expences of the hoſpitals. Theſe are but few of the many inſtances I could produce in favor of the charitable deeds of thoſe illuſtrious perſons, who are now no more. What numbers of valuable citizens, and how many poor families muſt have periſhed without their aid and aſſiſtance!

Yet I will allow that large ſums of money were expended by theſe great perſonages, as well as by the ſuperior clergy of the preſent day, upon the parade and ceremony, which the dignity of their reſpective ſtations required. But ſuch appendages are as neceſſary as the crown on the king's head, the judge's great wig, or the mace carried before the mayor on ſolemn occaſions. There muſt be ſomething to ſtrike the eye and the imagination of the people. One glance at ſuch dignified objects ſpeaks more forcibly to the minds

minds of men than all the ſermons or orations that ever were preached, or pronounced. Horace made this remark above eighteen hundred years ago, and experience has confirmed it. "Segnius irritant animos demiſſa "per aurem, quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta "fidelibus," are his words. A magiſtracy without its formalities, like a form of worſhip, diveſted of all exterior pomp and ceremony; would, according to Monteſquieu, be ſoon conſigned to the regions of the moon.

As I obſerved before, it muſt be confeſſed that there were many relaxed clergymen in France, (ſuch in particular as enjoyed great benefices) whoſe conduct and morals did not coincide with the duties and ſanctity of their profeſſion; yet it does not prove that they were all indiſcriminately corrupt, and that, to remedy the evil, it was neceſſary to pull down the whole fabric, becauſe ſome of the component parts were decayed and rotten. Why pull up the good corn with the tares? Why had they not ſome trial for reformation? as Mr. Collier remarks. Yet "the "overbalance of merit," according to the obſervation of the aboveſaid gentleman on the reign of Henry VIII. and which is equally applicable to our preſent ſubject, "could not

"divert

" divert the calamity, nor preſerve them from
" ruin. Thus we ſee how much the mercies
" of God are greater than thoſe of men.
" Juſtice below is ſometimes blind upon my-
" ſterious motives, ſtrikes without diſtinction,
" and ſweeps away the innocent with the
" guilty."

When I mentioned the *beneficed* clergy, I did not mean to include the rectors, vicars, or other parochial paſtors who were veſted with the cure of ſouls. Theſe, I may venture to ſay, have uniformly merited the approbation of all who knew them. The *beneficed* clergy, ſuch as archdeacons. deans, prebends, &c. might not however think themſelves bound to ſuch ſtrict diſcipline as the more immediate agents in the miniſtry of the church; and therefore might poſſibly conceive that the intention of the founders was to provide a genteel ſubſiſtence for gentlemen, which their family circumſtances would not admit of, upon certain conditions of keeping choir, and ſuch like. The genteel and decent manner in which our archdeacons, deans and prebends generally live in this country undoubtedly ſanctions my opinion. They live like gentlemen, not forgetting the obligations of their profeſſion. Thoſe who live

otherwiſe, be they French, or of any other nation, moſt undoubtedly defeat the intention of the founders. They ought to be reformed, but not annihilated; for every candid perſon muſt allow that ſuch foundations are liberal, and uſeful in every civilized country.

It cannot be ſuppoſed that the clergy in France were always as opulent, as they have been of late years. They had indeed cultivated the eſtates, which were bequeathed to the Church, with care and aſſiduity; many of them, I may ſay, from barren waſtes. In all the petty wars during the feudal ſyſtem, the lands of the Church were generally held ſacred; and as the owners were not engaged in theſe broils and diſputes, they uniformly attended to the culture and improvement of them. Living likewiſe ſo much within the income of their revenues, they had always money at command for that purpoſe, as alſo to aſſiſt the ſtate with ſubſidies, whenever they were required of them. "It is not to be "denied," ſays Mr. Collier, but they were "ſome of the beſt landlords." (Whoever has been in France muſt have made the ſame obſervation; viz. that the tenants of the Church were the moſt at their eaſe of any ſet

of

of people in that country.) " Their reſerved " rents were low, and fines eaſy; and ſome- " times the produce of their farms, without " paying money, diſcharged their tenants in a " great meaſure." Add to this, their lands muſt have riſen in proportion to the increaſe of money, and conſequently in value to the reſt of the kingdom. Hence all their riches, which, till it is incontrovertibly proved otherwiſe (and this has not as yet been done to ſatisfaction) were moſt equitably and juſtly acquired in the moſt rigid ſenſe of the word.

Many of the donations made to the Church were to eſtabliſh aſylums and places of retreat for perſons of ſuperior birth of both ſexes, who either choſe to withdraw from the world, or were not able to ſupport their dignity in it. As I remarked before, many of what are called the *beneficed* clergy, in my humble opinion, come under this deſcription. " Here," ſays Mr. Collier, " they " were furniſhed with the conveniences for " life and ſtudy, with opportunities for " thought and recollection, and over and " above paſſed their time in a condition not " unbecoming their quality." For they were not precluded from the free intercourſe of

their friends and acquaintances. In many of the female retreats eſpecially they made no vows of celibacy, and therefore might quit them, and marry whenever inclination or opportunity occurred.

The clergy had ſeminaries for learning and the inſtruction of youth in almoſt every town and city, where they taught without fee or reward. Had it not been for this uſeful body of men, the people might have remained for ever in the ſame profound ignorance in France, as pervaded Europe, in what is generally called the dark ages. "The clergy," as Mr. Collier obſerves, "promoted a gene-"ral improvement: they were very induſ-"trious in reſtoring learning, and retrieving "the country from the remarkable ignorance "of thoſe times." They attended the ſick and dying; particularly a ſet of women known by the name of *Les Sœurs griſes* (Grey Siſters) who, without any gratification whatever, attended night and day in the hoſpitals, and performed every act of charity and humanity towards the miſerable objects of thoſe manſions, regardleſs of their own feelings and the repugnancy of human nature to ſuch diſguſting and loathſome offices. Contraſt theſe with the mercenary women and nurſes who

attend

attend in our hoſpitals. The clergy, on their part, were not leſs zealous and aſſiduous to comfort the ſick, and prepare the dying objects to merit that bliſs which is held out to thoſe who die in the Lord. Other religious men devoted their whole lives to procure the emancipation of thoſe unfortunate people who had fallen into the hands of the Barbary Corſairs. The convents, beſides the unbounded charities they gave to the diſtreſſed, furniſhed the ſick gratuitouſly with drugs and medicines of all kinds. In fine the Church maintained all the poor, and did innumerable acts of charity, which (if properly known, and duly conſidered) would for ever ſilence the tongue of ſlander and malevolence.—I have ſaid thus much on this ſubject upon a double motive. The firſt, with the view of doing ſome little juſtice to the parties concerned; and ſecondly, to conform to Mr. Tanner's advice in his preface to *Notitia eccleſiaſtica*, himſelf a proteſtant, " that it would be but " common juſtice to infuſe a better opinion " of monaſteries into the generality of pro- " teſtants." Poſſibly on a future occaſion I may ſpeak more largely on that ſubject.

Does not natural equity and juſtice then require that ſome balance ſhould be ſtruck between

between the real and eſſential ſervices which the clergy of all denominations have certainly rendered to the community, and the relaxed morals of ſome individuals of that body of men? To draw general concluſions from particular facts is the height of injuſtice.

Nothing, in my poor opinion, can be a more authentic proof or teſtimony of their real merits, than the accumulated maſs of calumny and abuſe which has been thrown upon them; only calculated indeed for the ears of the vulgar; and it is them alone the intereſted party are ſtudious to deceive. Without the *majeſty of the people*, the faction would be without power or energy. If the clergy however were a paſſive and ignorant body, without a will to perſuade, or talents to enforce; without opulence to excite envy and to tempt the hand of avarice, they might have remained in perfect peace and tranquility for ever. But having ſhewn themſelves equally the inflexible opponents of atheiſm and irreligion, (I ſpeak of the generality of the clergy, be pleaſed to obſerve, and I appeal to the many excellent replies which they have made to Voltaire, Rouſſeau, &c. &c.) as well as the prudent and attentive managers of their revenues,

venues, (hence their great increaſe of riches) they were devoted to ruin and deſtruction.

It is a groſs impoſition to ſuppoſe that the ſale of their domains will liquidate the national debt, were they honeſtly and judiciouſly applied for that purpoſe. It is even reported, with confidence, that they will not ſuffice for the maintenance of their penſioned clergy. This, I believe, they evidently perceived themſelves; and their impoſing the oath on all churchmen was the only remedy they could adminiſter to the evil. By this manœuvre they made a conſiderable ſaving, having reduced above three fourths of that order; otherwiſe, by the confeſſion of their own committees, that deducting the tithes, which they have now aboliſhed, the remainder of the eccleſiaſtical revenues would not be ſufficient for that purpoſe. It would exceed, they ſay, above fifty millions of livres, if the debts of the clergy, which they contracted for the ſupport of the ſtate, and which their ſudden diſſolution prevented them from cancelling, are included. But from ſuch men as have ſhewn a pointed diſregard for all religion, what had the clergy to expect? In the Aſſembly, the majority were either Atheiſts, Deiſts, or at beſt totally indifferent about the matter.

matter. From ſuch a groupe, can we ſuppoſe any quarter would be given to the ancient eſtabliſhment? Beſides the injuſtice and iniquity of the proceeding, the Aſſembly behaved undoubtedly with unparalleled ingratitude towards that unfortunate claſs of men. The latter had joined them in ſupport of the revolution, and were received as the ſaviours of the ſtate. But when this purpoſe was anſwered, they turned their backs upon them, and voted their deſtruction, regardleſs of the important ſervices they rendered them in the critical moment.

But let us not talk of ingratitude when ſuch flagrant injuſtice ſtares us in the face on all ſides. Every invective, every calumny that could poſſibly debaſe and depreciate their characters in the eyes of the people, was thrown out againſt them. I have now ſome of thoſe *elegant* periods of modern philoſophy before me, and will tranſcribe a few out of the many thouſands that have been launched againſt that defenceleſs body of men. The few ſpecimens I ſhall give you will be an inconteſtible evidence of the turpitude and baſeneſs of their minds, and of the rancour of their hearts.

Voltaire

Voltaire, the patriarch of infidelity, and advocate for every ſpecies of immorality, in his philoſophical dictionary, as it is called, (Art. Abbè) inveighs againſt the epiſcopal order in the following manner. " You do " perfectly well, Gentlemen,—Take the whole " earth to yourſelves. Undoubtedly it be- " longs to ſuch intriguing men, as can get " poſſeſſion of it. " You have not been idle " in the days of ignorance, ſuperſtition, and " folly, to deprive us of our inheritances, nor " to tread us under foot, and to fatten your- " ſelves on that, which ſhould have been ap- " propriated to the ſubſiſtence of the poor " and the diſtreſſed." In another place addreſſing himſelf to the people, he tells them " to beware of adhering to a worſhip (the " chriſtian religion) for the ſake of a pack of " *blackguards (gredins)* whoſe only merit con- " ſiſts in ignorance, ſuperſtition, and filth" *(craſſe)*,—(Indeed I find myſelf totally unequal to give the literal tranſlation of ſuch low, vulgar, and indecent language; yet I am forced to wade through it) " and whoſe only " glory, he adds, is concentered in idleneſs " and raſcality." Such language confutes itſelf, and is beneath the notice of every rational being. Yet unfortunately it has had its

effect, and overturned both the church and ſtate of France. Among the many miſchiefs attendant on the diſſolution of the former, the poor, who were heretofore fed and relieved in all their neceſſities by that body of men, are now thrown upon the mercy of the nation. Should they find it expedient to make a proviſion for them hereafter, the charge will be as ſeverely felt, as the pariſh-rates for that purpoſe are at this moment in England, and no doubt but they will be as ill provided for. I mean by overſeers, church-wardens, &c.

They alledge (the Aſſembly I mean) that the eccleſiaſtical domains are to be ſold to ſatisfy the creditors of the ſtate. But are not the clergy equally the creditors of the ſtate? Did they not take to the miniſtry, and dedicate their lives and their labours to the good of their fellow-citizens upon the public faith? A great portion of the clergy had voluntarily relinquiſhed their own patrimony, and took to the Church for the ſame beneficent end. Theſe men moſt certainly placed their confidence likewiſe in the public faith for the emoluments which were annexed to their functions. Being fitted by education and habit for theſe purpoſes alone, they were unequal to the means of getting their bread in other profeſſions.

profeſſions. Why then was ſuch injuſtice to be done to them, and ſuch partiality ſhewn to a pack of uſurers. Such I call the creditors of the ſtate, who never lent any thing in ſupport of it but upon the moſt intereſted motives. Can it poſſibly be ſuppoſed, if ever the ſame defalcation ſhould happen again in France, that theſe miſcreants will gratuitouſly offer the millions for the ſupport of the ſtate, as the clergy have ſo frequently done? Say—Is humanity and patriotiſm the characteriſtic of a uſurer? But what ſecurity has the preſent remnant of the clergy for the payment of their ſtipends? *The word*, they tell you, *of the Aſſembly*. It may be aſked, how can the Aſſembly, in its preſent ſituation, make its promiſes good to them? They have ſeized the revenues of the Church to pay the creditors of the ſtate. What will they ſeize upon to pay the ſervice of the Church, in caſe they cannot fulfil their engagements? It is a well known fact that the people have already in ſeveral inſtances refuſed to pay the taxes, which the Aſſembly has decreed, (hence the enormous deficit between the receipt and the expenditure) what then have theſe ſtipendary prieſts to expect? They have the pledge indeed of the Aſſembly. *Vox, et preterea nihil!*—As the Abbè Sayes

obſerved " it would have been leſs cruel to " have murdered them all at once."

Surely ſome medium might have been adopted to ſuccour the ſtate with their property, as far as it would go, without ſtripping them all at once of their ſubſiſtence, and conſequently depriving them of all the comforts of life? Why might they not have been permitted to drop off by degrees, each incumbent enjoying his benefice to his death, and at that period to ſink into the public fund? Such a gradual extinction of benefices, ſo congenial to the laws of nature and humanity, would have given a degree of credit to the Aſſembly, which they are now far from poſſeſſing. It would have been a palliative to ſo great a ſtretch of power, and would not have deprived the clergy of their preſent ſubſiſtence. But inſtead of conforming, even in ſo ſmall a degree, to the dictates of equity and juſtice, they added inſult to oppreſſion, a ſpecies of cruelty peculiar to themſelves. In a ſtrain of irony they cloſed their decree againſt the clergy in the following words: " That church- " men being now diſengaged from all the in- " cumbrances of the world, would be able " henceforth to attain, without obſtruction, to " the perfection of evangelical purity."

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It has been ſaid (I have taken the following remarks from Mr. Calonne's excellent pamphlet on the preſent and future ſtate of France) that "the clergy are only uſufructu-"aries." Doubtleſs. Of the property which the body of the clergy collectively poſſeſſes, its members individually have only the uſufruct: but is not the uſufruct to be placed among the number of inviolable poſſeſſions? We are only uſufructuaries of life, but that is no reaſon we ſhould be deprived of it.

"The clergy have no property." How ſo? Does a legal poſſeſſion, held without diſpute during a long ſucceſſion of ages, differ in law from real property? Surely the lands which have been given and legally tranſmitted to the clergy by thoſe to whom they appertained, and which they have cleared, improved and increaſed in value to a hundred times the original worth, and in which they have been confirmed in the poſſeſſion, do appertain to them as proprietors? In whom did the right reſide, during this immemorial poſſeſſion? *In the Nation.* That is *nobody*; for what appertains to all, appertains to none. The founders endowed theſe houſes for *public* benefit, they did not give them to the *public*. They aſſigned them for the ſervice of religion, and

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the relief of the poor. The public can have no other concern than to ſee they are applied to the uſes propoſed. And if the Nation chuſes to take this property, ought it not to revert to its ſource, and return to the heirs of the donors? So far M. Calonne.

But *might* overcomes *right*. And it is in vain to argue with thoſe who have power in hand, and iniquity at heart. "Id enim eſt "æquius, ſays Tacitus, quod eſt fortius."

You know that I am neither a Frenchman, or of the clergy, and therefore cannot have the *leaſt* intereſt in what I have ſaid. The force of truth, as it appears to me, and that equity and juſtice, which is due to all mankind, alone has rouzed my zeal, and compelled me to deliver my ſentiments with that honeſt freedom which becomes a Briton. Was any other deſcription of men treated with that indignant cruelty which the French clergy have experienced, I ſhould think my pains well beſtowed if I could reſcue them from contempt and obloquy, even in the eyes of one individual.—I now paſs over to the King.

By all parties Lewis XVI. is allowed to be a *good* man. No great character however for a prince, whatever it may be for an individual; particularly for a prince who had ſuch

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an artful, reſtleſs and intriguing nation to govern. A *good* prince, taken according to the common acceptation of the word, and a *weak* prince, in a political ſenſe are nearly ſynonimous terms. Far be it however from me to detract in the leaſt from the merit, which his goodneſs of heart entitles him to. In a private perſon it would be invaluable, and ſtill more ſo in a prince, when united with political knowledge and firmneſs of diſpoſition.

Without theſe requiſites, nothing but ruin and deſolation is likely to enſue. Lewis XVI. affords a melancholy inſtance of the truth of my aſſertion. This innate goodneſs of heart, this unſuſpecting temper, compliant diſpoſition, and inexperienced mind which the king poſſeſſes had long been abuſed by court paraſites and flatterers. Theſe excellent qualities in the king were likewiſe made ſubſervient to the baſeſt purpoſes by thoſe without doors; in other words, by the intriguing and deſigning part of the nation. Hence we may diſcover almoſt the very root and ſource of the revolution. For though he was frequently informed by ſeveral perſons, who wiſhed him well, that certain men were openly endeavouring to corrupt the army, and ſeduce the people from their duty and allegiance, whom they

they were haranguing daily in the *Palais royal* for that purpoſe, and at the ſame time bribing them with that ſhining metal, which few people can reſiſt, he either affected not to believe the information, or gave himſelf no concern to remedy the evil. Like our King James I. who remarked, when clad in unwieldy armour under which he could ſcarcely move, that *he could hurt nobody, and that nobody could hurt him*; ſo, it may be ſuppoſed Lewis XVI. argued. He meant no harm to any body, therefore could not ſuſpect that any body intended harm towards him. M. Turgot, his miniſter, however aſſured him that if he did not keep a watchful eye upon the evil machinations of certain people, his reign would prove as diſaſtrous to the French nation, as that of his predeceſſor Charles VI. The king was rouſed at this information, and ſeemed either hurt, or offended at it. M. Maurepas, to whom he told it in confidence, turned it off in a joke, laughed at it, and wanted the king to do as much. From theſe premiſes we may doubt, whatever his majeſty's education might have been in other reſpects, whether he was ever let into the ſecret of his own conſequence and importance. His actions do not ſeem to indicate it. The firſt letters he ever wrote with

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his own hand, after he aſcended the throne, were to a young man who had the care and management of his locks and keys, in which he was very curious, and took great delight; as likewiſe to the perſon who had the ſuperintendance of his rabbits. Alexander the Great is ſaid to have made love, when he had nothing elſe to do. Other kings, as reported, have amuſed themſelves in making buttons, and other baubles, when releaſed from the affairs of ſtate. Why might not Lewis XVI. do as much? Though by all accounts he does not want capacity, many circumſtances combined unfortunately to cramp the improvement and exertion of it; and it may, I believe, be truly ſaid that all his misfortunes aroſe, added to his own eaſy and unſuſpecting temper, to the want of that political ſcience and knowledge, ſo eſſential to every ſovereign prince.

One of his ſecretaries (Septchaines by name) having tranſlated, by his order, Gibbon's Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, into French, omitted a paſſage wherein the author ſays, that the reigns of the different races of the French monarchs concluded in weak princes; and poſſibly the preſent race is threatened with the ſame fate.

The king, who underſtands Engliſh a little, perceived the blank, and tranſlated the paſſage, diverting himſelf much at the caution and delicacy of the ſecretary, as alſo at the prediction of the author.

The name of Gibbon obliges me to remark, that it is much to be feared that he wrote the aboveſaid hiſtory with the ſame view and in the ſame ſpirit as Voltaire. Their ideas and principles ſeem nearly congenial, if we may judge from their writings. The xv and xvi chapters of his firſt volume are filled with invectives and ſatires on the lives and deportment of the primitive chriſtians. And in many part of his work, are frequently interſperſed ſuch reflections and anecdotes (not always indeed *duly* authenticated) as tend to diſgrace and depreciate that religion which all Europe, and his own native country in particular, had thought proper to adopt and reverence. If the attempt is not judicious, it may be deemed indeed bold and daring, for ſuch principles have undoubtedly overturned both the religion and government of France; and if they were adopted here, would ſoon, by their baneful influence, create the ſame confuſion in this country. For without religion there can be no morals, and conſequently no

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ſubordination, but what ariſes from the force and terror of the laws. And what are laws, ſays Horace, without morals? Quid vanæ leges ſine moribus efficient?

But to return to my ſubject. I gave you a ſpecimen of the invectives which have been ſo liberally beſtowed by Voltaire upon the clergy. Theſe (excuſe me for repeating) added to the tempting bait, which their riches held forth, completely wrought their ruin and deſtruction. The ſame torrent of abuſe, though indiſcriminately levelled at all ſovereign princes, was particularly aimed at Lewis XVI. and finally involved him in all thoſe calamities which he has ſince experienced. But ſtrange to relate! It is to the chriſtian religion they attribute all their evil deeds. For according to their logic, if the religion is bad, the clergy who teach it muſt be ſo, and princes, who profeſs it, are conſequently included in the cenſure. Thus they overturn both church and ſtate with a wet finger.

Let us however attend to ſome of their illuminating principles. "The chriſtian religion," ſays a certain modern philoſopher, "is a collection of abſurdities, and the unnatural production of all the ancient ſuperſtitions. It is a ſanguinary religion, which

" transforms princes into tyrants, and the " people into ſlaves.—A true chriſtian can " have no idea of ſound morality. At the " beſt he can only be a uſeleſs miſanthrope, " or a reſtleſs and turbulent fanatic.—How " often do we ſee the moſt religious princes " undertake the moſt unjuſt wars; prodi- " gally waſting the blood and treaſure of " their ſubjects; tearing the bread from the " mouths of the poor; conniving at, and " even commanding every ſpecies of robbery " and plunder; committing all kinds of in- " juſtice and rapacity. Among the clergy " we meet with nothing but pride, avarice, " ſenſuality, the ſpirit of domination, re- " venge, &c.—It was religion that begot and " foſtered tyranny and deſpotiſm. Kings " were ſervilely ſtiled the repreſentatives of " God. They conſequently become abſo- " lute like him.—Their arbitrary commands " too frequently gave a ſanction to violence, " rapine and oppreſſion, &c. &c." (Pref. to the important inquiry.)

I muſt obſerve that the abettors of theſe levelling principles, like pirates, who often fight under falſe colours, frequently diſguiſe themſelves under fictitious names, ſo that it becomes a matter of ſome difficulty to aſcer-

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tain the real authors. This unworthy ſubterfuge, ſo congenial to thoſe who write againſt principle and conſcience, has often been made uſe of by Voltaire. His writings have appeared under the names of Bolingbroke, a Quaker, a Preſbyterian, a Chineſe, &c. &c. yet the cloven foot has always been diſcovered, though ſo artfully concealed under the maſk of deceit and hypocriſy. Whether or not he is the author of the book before me (the Important Inquiry) I will not venture to affirm for the reaſon above mentioned. But to thoſe who have read his avowed works I dare appeal; and am confident that they will not heſitate to agree with me, that they have met with invectives, both againſt the church and ſtate, to the full as injurious as thoſe I have tranſcribed.

In the many letters I have written upon the ſubject of the French revolution, I have endeavoured to trace the cauſes which produced that aſtoniſhing and unfortunate event. One however, which I have not as yet noticed, ſtrikes me in a very forcible manner; and though it ill becomes me even to hint at, much leſs to pronounce upon the ſecret decrees of providence, yet I cannot help ſaying that the exceſs of corruption both of faith

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and morals, which has pervaded the generality of the French nation, ſeems to me to have deprived them of thoſe lights and of that aſſiſtance from above, which they ſo neceſſarily ſtand in need of in the formation of their new government.

The manner in which they have proceeded, and ſtill ſeem to proceed, in a certain degree juſtifies the idea. In too many inſtances we ſee them act like men bereft of their ſenſes, and therefore are apt to conclude that they are totally given up to the guidance and direction of their own powers and abilities. Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat.

" That long concatenation of particular " cauſes, however," (to uſe the words of a worthy French biſhop of the laſt century) " which make and unmake empires, depends " upon the ſecret orders of divine provi- " dence. God from the higheſt heavens " holds the reins of all the kingdoms of the " earth. He hath all hearts in his hands. " Sometimes he gives a looſe to them, and " thereby moveth all mankind. He it is who " propoſes effects in their remoteſt cauſes, " and he it is who ſtrikes thoſe great ſtrokes, " the counterſtroke whereof is of ſuch ex-

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" tenſive conſequence. Let us talk no more " of chance or of fortune; what is chance " in our uncertain councils, is a concerted " deſign in a higher council. Thereby is ve- " rified the ſaying of the apoſtle, that *God is* " *the bleſſed and only Potentate*, the King of " Kings, and Lord of Lords, who cauſes all " revolutions by an immutable council; who " gives, and takes away power; who transfers " it from one man to another; from one " houſe to another; from one people to ano- " ther, to ſhow that they all have it only bor- " rowed, and that it is he alone in whom it " naturally reſides." With this ſenſible re- mark, moſt becoming and meet for us blind and limited mortals here on earth to adopt, I conclude my epiſtle; and wiſhing you health, proſperity, and inexperience of all re- volutions whatever, I ſubſcribe myſelf

Dear SIR, &c.

London,
Feb. 15th, 1792.

PARAGRAPHS

PARAGRAPHS

FOR THE

ST. JAMES'S CHRONICLE,

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE EMPEROR, MARCH 15, 1792*.

THE ſudden and premature death of Leopold, late Emperor of Germany, muſt chill the heart of every reflecting perſon with horror and diſmay, if the firſt report which was generally received, be true, that he died by poiſon. It muſt make us tremble, not only for the future fate of kings and princes, but alſo for ourſelves. For what ſecurity can there be for any deſcription of men, if ſuch diabolical meaſures are taken, againſt the black and treacherous deeds of the dark aſſaſſin? When any ſet of men maintain ſuch principles, as prevail particularly in the de-

* This paragraph was inſerted in the St. James's Chronicle on the 17th inſtant.

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mocratic faction in France, added to the contempt which has been ſo frequently manifeſted for the Emperor in the Aſſembly itſelf, and the inſults which the mob have been permitted, or rather inſtigated to offer to his perſon in effigy, it cannot be imputed to a want of charity if the ſtrongeſt ſuſpicions might have fallen on that nation. Since the Aſſembly has thought proper to *deify* a man (Mirabeau) who appears to have been one of the inſtigators of thoſe acts of blood; who ſeems to have thought that crimes are neceſſary inſtruments of policy; who, with many others of the ſame caſt, avowed thoſe ſentiments openly and without diſguiſe in the Aſſembly itſelf, it cannot be ſurpriſing that men ſhould have retained at this moment a very unfavorable idea of the melancholy event which has juſt taken place; at leaſt till ſuch evidence is adduced as incontrovertibly proves the fallacy of their ſuſpicions.

The great leaders of the Jacobine clubs, thoſe very ſocieties, whom Meſſrs. Price, the Birmingham-doctor, &c. have particularly choſen to correſpond with, have more than once hinted that it was a trifling offence in the people to murder a criminal whom *the laws could not reach.* M. Iſnard told the Aſ-

 ſembly,

ſembly, when they were debating on a law againſt the emigrants, that " the vengeance " of the people was like the vengeance of " heaven, the terrible ſupplement to the laws." —Mirabeau on a certain occaſion pronounced that " the Ariſtocrats are grown inſolent " from their victory of yeſterday; a fort- " night ago they dared not, *for their own* " *ſafety*, have objected to the propoſal." Let us compare this ſentence with ſimilar words uſed by the ſame orator. He ſaid " that the " Emperor of Germany would be unwilling " to engage in the quarrel, when he recol- " lected what an hoſtage was *in the hands of* " *the French.*" And again; " The puniſh- " ment of one Vizier will become a leſſon to " another."

It plainly appears then that the threats of murder and aſſaſſination were the favorite argument of that ambitious demagogue and others of thoſe ſocieties. And as Tom Paine ſays *the people are apt ſcholars*, it might naturally be feared that ſome villain of that deſcription ſhould take the hint, and diſpatch the Emperor, whom *the laws could not reach.*

* March 27.

THERE is an old prejudice exiſting in this country, and by repeated experience too well founded, that the French nation is of ſuch a reſtleſs and ambitious nature that they never remain inactive whenever the poſſibility of doing miſchief to their neighbours occurs. We might however have reaſonably ſuppoſed this reſtleſs diſpoſition to have been done away in the maſs of other political ſins imputed to their former government; and the more ſo, ſince they have by a ſolemn public act diſclaimed all wars and conqueſts, and ſolicit the *union of nations, and the fraternal embraces of the friends of liberty*. Theſe however are only words. They will not ſtand the teſt of facts, and it is to facts that the appeal is made. It is therefore ſincerely to be hoped that when Engliſhmen are informed how little their actions accord with theſe pompous profeſſions, they will ſtill retain their wonted prejudices, and not be deceived by ſuch bombaſt and high ſounding language. Let them remember that at all times a falſe friend is worſe than an open

* It appeared in the St, James's Chronicle on the 29th of March.

enemy. In all countries there will be parties. From various circumſtances it is impoſſible that all people ſhould think alike. The great object then of theſe artful French politicians is to foment differences among their neighbours, to ſet the people by the ears, and to profit, as occaſion may ſerve, by their diſcontents. For to aim at the poſſeſſion of any country *by conqueſt* would be too barefaced, and give the lie direct to their pompous decrees and reſolutions of *avoiding wars, and of keeping peace with all mankind.* They chuſe the ſafer, though not more honorable method of their reverend correſpondent, the Birmingham doctor. "They lay a train of gun-"powder" (to uſe his own words) "under "the old fabric, which a ſingle ſpark may "hereafter inflame, ſo as to produce an in-"ſtantaneous exploſion." Such a mode of proceeding is more congenial to their dark policy, and in a manner ſaves their credit with the majority of mankind, who do not obſerve and ſcrutinize their actions, eſpecially where they lie at a diſtance, with all that attention which the magnitude of the evil requires. It was in this underhand manner they got poſſeſſion of Avignon and the *Comtat de Venaiſſin.* They would have done as much, had they been

been ſucceſsful at the moment in their intrigues, at Geneva, Berne in Switzerland, and in Auſtrian Flanders. In other places, ſuch as Liege, and more eſpecially in this country, where their emiſſaries are very buſy, they are content with viewing things at a greater diſtance. The oblique cenſures, however, which they are continually caſting on our government and conſtitution prove that they flatter themſelves that they ſhall profit at ſome future period by the anarchy and confuſion they are endeavouring to create. Let then the fate of Avignon be a warning to Britons.

Avignon and its appendages, moſt people know, were purchaſed by Pope Clement VI. of Joan Counteſs of Provence, and Queen of Jeruſalem, Naples and Sicily, in the year 1352, for 80000 golden florins. Before ſhe died ſhe adopted Lewis of France, Duke of Anjou, the ſon of King John, for her heir and ſucceſſor. Avignon however was not a part of that ſucceſſion. Her right to it ſhe had transferred to Clement VI. for a valuable conſideration, as above ſaid. The popes enjoyed the ſovereignty of it to the preſent time without any interruption, if we except that the French kings, when they quarrelled with the

Popes,

Popes, often ſeized this defenceleſs ſtate, and kept it as a depoſit in their hands, till their diſputes were amicably adjuſted. Thus we ſee that the Popes could plead a preſcriptive right of 439 years, which, added to a legal purchaſe muſt make a title good, if any ſuch exiſts upon earth. If the poſſeſſion of Avignon was neceſſary for the peace and tranquillity of the French kingdom, there cannot be a doubt but it would have been ceded upon juſt and equitable terms, for its revenues could be no juſt object to the See of Rome, as they barely ſupported the charges of government. The greateſt advantage aroſe from the extent of patronage, and in being a place of refuge for the Popes in times of war or ſedition. The government was mild, and the people enjoyed a kind of happy indolence until the French had taught them the fatal and ſenſeleſs leſſon on the *rights of Man*, which, after cauſing a deluge of blood to be ſpilt between citizen and citizen, overturned *the rights* of ſociety. The injuſtice, however, as well as the abſurdity of the undertaking after all their pompous renunciations of conqueſts, occaſioned violent debates in the National Aſſembly. Both were too ſelf-evident not to extort from the majority a decree that

" Avignon

" Avignon formed *no part* of the French " empire." This act greatly diſappointed the deſigning faction. The mob however, that powerful engine of crafty ſedition, was at hand, and ſet upon M. de Clermont Tonnere who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the debate. He was inſulted, and threatened both with the fatal lantern and the deſtruction of his houſe and property. Thus they ſilenced all the reſt, and (as uſual) carried the day. Upon which it was ſhrewdly obſerved that " the people " had given an important leſſon to the Aſ- " ſembly." Things being brought to this iſſue, overlooking the injuſtice and abſurdity of the enterprize, after all their fine declarations, they boldly decreed that Avignon being an object of importance and of convenience to the ſtate, it ſhould henceforth be united to the French empire. In the courſe of this buſineſs however ſuch a deluge of blood was ſhed by the contending parties, which the Aſſembly had pitted againſt each other, that it was impoſſible they could juſtify it in the face of the world any longer. They affected therefore to receive the intelligence of the horrid ſcenes, which they themſelves had inſtigated, with the ſcreams of a knot of hyſterical women aſſembled at a tragedy. The letter,

ter, as the ſecretary read it, which communicated the * bloody intelligence, dropped from his hands. But ſuch only were the dupes of this horrid farce, who were ignorant of their vile machinations among the inhabitants of Avignon, and thoſe who never heard of the aſſertions of the Aſſembly itſelf, frequently repeated within theſe walls, " That to con-" demn the revolution of Avignon, was to " condemn the revolution of France, for " they both ſtood upon the ſame footing." It might be added, *and carried into execution in the ſame bloody and treacherous manner.*

TO BE CONTINUED.

* Among other facts, that above ſixty citizens, who had been confined for ſeveral months in a dark dungeon, were taken from thence, and put to death. Their bodies were thrown into a well, and finally diſcovered by the ſtench; That others were hung up, and their dying convulſions inſulted by the mob, crying out, *Dance, Dance, ye dogs of Ariſtocrates.*

April 2.

In the laſt paper a ſhort ſketch was adduced in regard of the perfidiouſneſs of the French in the affairs of Avignon. The uninformed reader will now perceive that they have been equally buſy in other places, although, *not as yet* equally ſucceſsful. Geneva has been long divided into parties, and their civil diſſenſions have of late been fomented underhand by thoſe men who are called, by the abuſe of words, French patriots, and particularly by the writers who aſſiſted Mirabeau in the periodical paper, called *Le Courier de Provence*, which he regularly publiſhed. In the beginning of laſt year (1791) things being brought to a certain degree of maturity, the ſignal of an intended revolt was given by ſinging the famous ſong * *Ca ira* under the windows of the magiſtrates. After conſigning all the Ariſtocrates to the lantern in the

* This trifling air, which is very gay and lively, has been conſtantly the ſignal of revolt. Twice it has been attempted in the Haymarket Theatre. Ought not the abettors to be noticed and duly puniſhed?

ſong, they added *and all the citizens alſo.* In the month of February an open attack was made upon the town by the neighbouring peaſants, and it was apprehended that a party within the walls would open the gates, and give up their adverſaries to be plundered by the rabble. All the citizens got under arms, and continued ſo for ſome days, till the inſurgents finding that the French peaſants of the *Pays* (the country) of *Gex* did not join them as was expected, returned to a ſtate of tranquillity. This attempt was ſuppoſed to have been inſtigated by a man who had been once a democrate of Geneva, and now become a Frenchman, and elected Mayor of *Gex.*

In the mean while the French journaliſts, who repeat with tranſport the news of every inſurrection in every corner of Europe, expreſſed particular ſatisfaction at the troubles of Geneva, and aſſured their countrymen, "that Geneva would ſoon follow the example "of Avignon, and demand to be incorpo-"rated with the French empire." This circumſtance opened the eyes of the people of Geneva, who cordially and unanimouſly united together in defence of the common cauſe, and have ever ſince (though ſtill divided among themſelves in other reſpects) been very

very ſuſpicious of French patriots and French politics.—In Berne thoſe politics did not ſucceed better, for they had the fate of Avignon before their eyes. This inclination in the French to kindle a civil war in Switzerland is grievouſly complained of by Necker in his laſt book. "Theſe little ſtates," ſays he, "till the French revolutioniſts ſent their "emiſſaries among them, had the *weakneſs* "to think themſelves happy."

The letter from one of the political clubs, which was lately diſperſed through Auſtrian Flanders is an additional proof of that ſpirit of intrigue, of the reſtleſs temper, the artful, and underhand interference of the French in the affairs of other people. The ſubſtance of this letter is as follows. "Gentlemen, "You know the value of liberty. You wiſh-"ed for it, but unfortunate events have pre-"vented you from obtaining it. The friends "of the French conſtitution *embrace the whole* "*world*" (a fine bombaſt idea!) "in their "ſyſtem of philanthropy, and in virtue of that "right, Sirs, they expreſs their hopes that "when * you return again into your country, "you will ſcatter the ſeeds of our beneficent

* They were obliged to fly for rebellious practices.

" projects, that they may produce a plentiful " harveſt."

TO BE CONTINUED.

APRIL 7.

IN the progreſs of the inquiry concerning the underhand and artful interference of the French in the affairs of other ſtates, we find that Liege revolted againſt its prince and biſhop ſoon after the celebrated 14th of July, the day of the grand confederation at Paris. The malcontents kept up a correſpondence with the republican French leaders, but drawing on itſelf the reſentment of the German empire, they have been obliged to ſubmit, and conſequently to relinquiſh their patriotic aſſociates. Though their newſpaper and journals of literature have been a little more indulgent to this nation, (for reaſons beſt known to themſelves) than they have been to their other neighbours, yet upon ſeveral occaſions they have expreſſed a ſovereign contempt for our form and mode of government, and have enlarged upon the miſeries of the people in conſe-

conſequences of it; and all this not without ſome deſign. Nothing can more prove the indirect and oblique method they take of depreciating our conſtitution, than the * letter which the Aſſembly cauſed to be written to the States of Penſylvania. "We eſtabliſh" it is therein ſaid, "under the conſtitutional "authority of a king the ſame liberty as you "have eſtabliſhed under republican forms; "*a liberty very different from that, which com-* "*poſed of charters and privileges, alters, by he-* "*reditary diſtinctions, civil equality, that unalie-* "*nable patrimony of men united in ſociety, which* "*balancing the eternal ſovereignty of the people* "*by the prerogatives of birth and the rights of* "*chance, yet ſhows on the bold features of a re-* "*generated nation the ſcars of its ancient ſla-* "*very.*"—The famous decree for the abolition of the French nobility, carries in its very preamble the ſtrongeſt features of that conceit and vanity which would ſquare the opinions of all the world to its own; of which it is difficult for other nations to ſpeak, without betraying a little reſentment. The Aſſembly were not ſatisfied with declaring that hereditary no-

* This was a letter of thanks, becauſe they had decreed a ſhort mourning for Dr. Franklin.

bility

bility is incompatible with *the liberty of France*, it declares in general terms, that *hereditary nobility is incompatible with a free ſtate*; and thus, by implication, declares all Europe to be enſlaved. The French newſpaper writers and pamphleteers greedily catch up every lie which they think may poſſibly degrade this nation, and create a confuſion in it. At one time they announced that the Houſe of Lords was to be aboliſhed. At another that a riot, ſimilar to that of 1780, was hourly expected; that the guards had been ordered to hold themſelves in readineſs, and that they had refuſed to act; that the Commons had refuſed ſupplies to Mr. Pitt in ſupport of the quarrel with Spain; that the King in anger had diſſolved them. They then concluded that the Engliſh people had riſen, and attacked the nobility. The *Mercure* (a French newſpaper) of the 23d of July 1791 makes the following remark on a pamphlet called *La Police de Paris*, which was written to cenſure the police of the former government. "We cannot "conclude this article without recommend-"ing to the curioſity of our readers a paſſage "on the police of London. The author ob-"ſerves ſeveral monſtrous defects. — But "what is more aſtoniſhing" (and truly aſtoniſh-

aſtoniſhing it is) " is the exceſſive miſery of " an immenſe portion of the people.——The " conſequences" he adds, " may be *dreadful* " *on the eve of thoſe ſhocks which threaten go-* " *vernment.*" Then commenting on ſome paſſages from the laſt advertiſements of the Conſtitutional Society (which he miſtakes for a petition) he concludes with ſaying " that " the time approaches when juſtice will be " demanded in ſo firm a tone, that it cannot " be refuſed." " In a country" he adds, " where people ſpeak in that ſtile, in the bo- " ſom of a capital where the immenſe popula- " tion preſents the aſpect of a miſery ſo hi- " deous, that it is not to be compared to " Paris; in ſuch a ſituation of things how " long can ſubſiſt the political abuſes of Eng- " land complained of by *the friends of the* " *conſtitution*, the friends of the French revo- " lution? An intereſting queſtion, and worthy " of the attention of the cabinet of St. " James's!"—At the moment this was writ- ten, it may be with great probability ſuſpected that they were waiting for an account of the celebration of the 14th of July, (1791) and indulging themſelves in the ſavage expectation that the rabble of London would treat a Lord Mayor, or a Secretary of State, as cruelly as

the

the mob of Paris had treated Meſſrs. Berthier and Foulon.

TO BE CONTINUED.

MAY 10.

WHEN the ſtate is in danger of an attack, every citizen ought to take up arms. When libellous ſcribblers are ſuffered to impeach the ſyſtem of government and the conſtitution of a country with impunity which the majority reſpects, every man intereſted in its preſervation, as procuring to him the invaluable bleſſings of peace and tranquillity, ought to take the alarm, and, with all the powers he poſſeſſes, endeavour to counteract the baneful and noxious principles which are ſo daringly diſſeminated throughout the realm. If a hungry and half-famiſhed printer, to procure himſelf a dinner, ventures to publiſh a tale of ſcandal, he is inſtantly, and often juſtly puniſhed. But the wretch who ſo groſsly inſults the nation at large by cenſuring their government and conſtitution; who treats the ſupreme magiſtrate thereof, whom the majority of that nation reſpects and reverences, with

with a contempt and indignity, with a *blackguardiſm* (if ſuch a word may be uſed) which beggars all deſcription; who dares not only ſubſcribe his name, but even at the moment that he reprobates all titles and diſtinctions, ſigns himſelf *Secretary to the American Congreſs for foreign affairs*, &c. who finally boaſts to all the world that his libellous pamphlets have run through more editions than that of a * gentleman who has wrote in favor of peace, order and decency; and that it will be ſufficient to give him an anſwer when the ſaid publication has had † equal ſucceſs; that ſuch a wretch ſhould be ſuffered to range at large, and inſult the public, (let it be repeated) is a paradox which few people can underſtand.—Is it out of contempt for his perſon, or his principles, that he has remained ſo long un-noticed? But ſurely the man who inſults a whole nation; who libels, defames, and ſatirizes the head and chief governor of that nation, is as much an object of legal puniſhment, as the miſerable retailers of ſcandal, who are puniſhed almoſt

* Mr. Burke.

† This can never happen till Mr Burke's pamphlet is diſtributed gratis, like the *Rights of Man*.

every day. It cannot be from a contempt of his principles, for they ſtrike at the very vitals, the very eſſence of the preſent government and conſtitution of this country; and, if adopted in the whole, would eradicate every bleſſing of ſocial life. They tend to inflame the minds of the people, who greedily ſwallow every thing, though ever ſo prepoſterous, which flatters their paſſions. Thus they become diſſatisfied with the government they live under, and not only wiſh for a change, but are ready to promote it whenever an opportunity offers. "Principiis obſta, ſerò "medecina paratur" is a wiſe old adage, which may be engliſhed thus: "A ſtitch in "time, ſaves nine." A few days previous to the riots in 1780, Lord N—— was forewarned of the dangerous aſpect of things. Brother Lazarus was however then aſleep, and paid no attention to the information. We know too well the conſequence of his Lordſhip's ſupineneſs and inattention, to dwell farther upon the ſubject. The ſame cauſes however have generally the ſame effects. And although a Paine's mob may not ſucceed better (for it is but too true that miſchief they wiſh for, and miſchief they are ready to do, whenever the opportunity offers) than that of Lord George Gordon,

Gordon, yet even the effects of the latter are too recent in moſt men's minds, not to make them dread a repetition of the calamities which the nation then experienced. That miſchief they wiſh for, and miſchief they are ready to do, as has been obſerved, is evident from the writings not only of Paine, but likewiſe of thoſe of the ſame party. Let us attend to what the Birmingham doctor has ſaid upon this ſubject. "We lay" ſays he, "a train of gun-powder under the old "fabric of error and ſuperſtition, which a "ſingle ſpark may hereafter inflame ſo as to "produce an inſtantaneous exploſion." In an advertiſement from the Conſtitutional Society we read the following paragraph. "The "time approaches when juſtice will be de-"manded in ſo firm a tone, that it cannot be "refuſed." That trifling ſong *Ca ira* has been the ſignal of revolt and ſedition wherever French politics have prevailed, or the attempt to introduce them has been made, as at Paris, Avignon, Berne, Liege, Bruxelles, and even in this country. It is well known that it was twice at leaſt attempted in the Haymarket theatre. But things at that moment were not ripe for execution. It behoves then thoſe, who are intruſted with the guardianſhip

dianſhip and ſuperintendence of peace and order, to keep a watchful eye over that portion of malcontents who are ready to revive the ſame horrid ſcenes which the nation unfortunately experienced in the year 1780.—The ſpirit of ſedition loſes no opportunity; overlooks no advantage which it may acquire from the overſight and ill-policy of its oppo-nents. They declaim with violence againſt the pride and tyranny of ariſtocracy, as may be gathered from the following ſpeech of Mr. Erſkine at * Newark. He ſaid, " that " it had been by acts of oppreſſion and perſe-" cution by the nobles of ſome neighbouring " kingdoms, that the nobility were firſt " brought into diſgrace, and afterwards into " ruin. He was himſelf of noble blood, and " therefore ſhould in ſome degree lament its " downfall, as he knew it was ſometimes ac-" companied by nobleneſs of mind. But the " hour was faſt approaching when the gaudy " trappings of the peerage would be torn off " by the avenging hand of popular retribu-" tion, for the purpoſe of expoſing to the " public eye the rotten and diſtorted carcaſe,

* He went to try the validity of two votes againſt the intereſt of the Duke of Newcaſtle.

" whoſe

" whoſe innumerable and execrable oppreſ-
" ſions had contaminated the garb that co-
" vered it*." At a time when every effort is ſtrained to make the nobility odious, and to level all diſtinctions, as they have done in France, Lord Lauderdale's ſpeech in the affair of Mr. Cookſey pointed out the wiſer courſe, which ought to have been taken by attentive and acute politicians. And however juſt, equitable and expedient it may be to aboliſh the ſlave-trade, it is certainly a delicate ſubject to debate upon at this preſent moment. The people in general, that is three fourths of this nation, underſtand nothing of it, and therefore are apt to form ideas which may prove in the end very diſtreſſing. The horrid ſcenes which have taken place in St. Domingo were but the conſequence of an ill-timed and miſplaced decree of the National Aſſembly, which paſſed on the 15th of May 1791, and which they were obliged to revoke on the 24th of September following. But the miſchief was done, and no one can tell when it will ceaſe.

* Extracted from Lloyd's Evening Poſt from March 28th to the 30th.

To

To conclude. Whatever abuſes there are exiſting in this country, (and no doubt but too many do exiſt, the inevitable conſequence of the hand of time) it is to be hoped they will be *quietly* and *calmly* done away; without noiſe, or tumult. Let us adopt the ſenſible remark of the Empreſs of Ruſſia to Mr. Howard, when he apprized her that there were many abuſes in the priſons in her dominions which ſtood in great need of reform. "Monſieur," ſaid ſhe, "il faut tirer un clous après l'autre." "Sir, we muſt draw one nail out after the "other."

FINIS.